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20Q

JON STEWART
INTERVIEW

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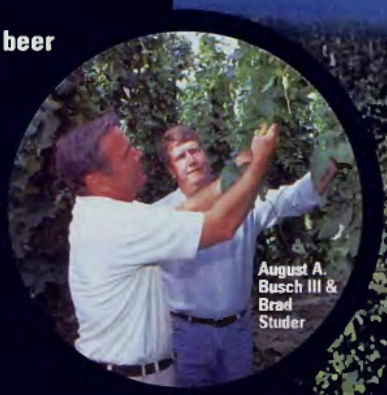

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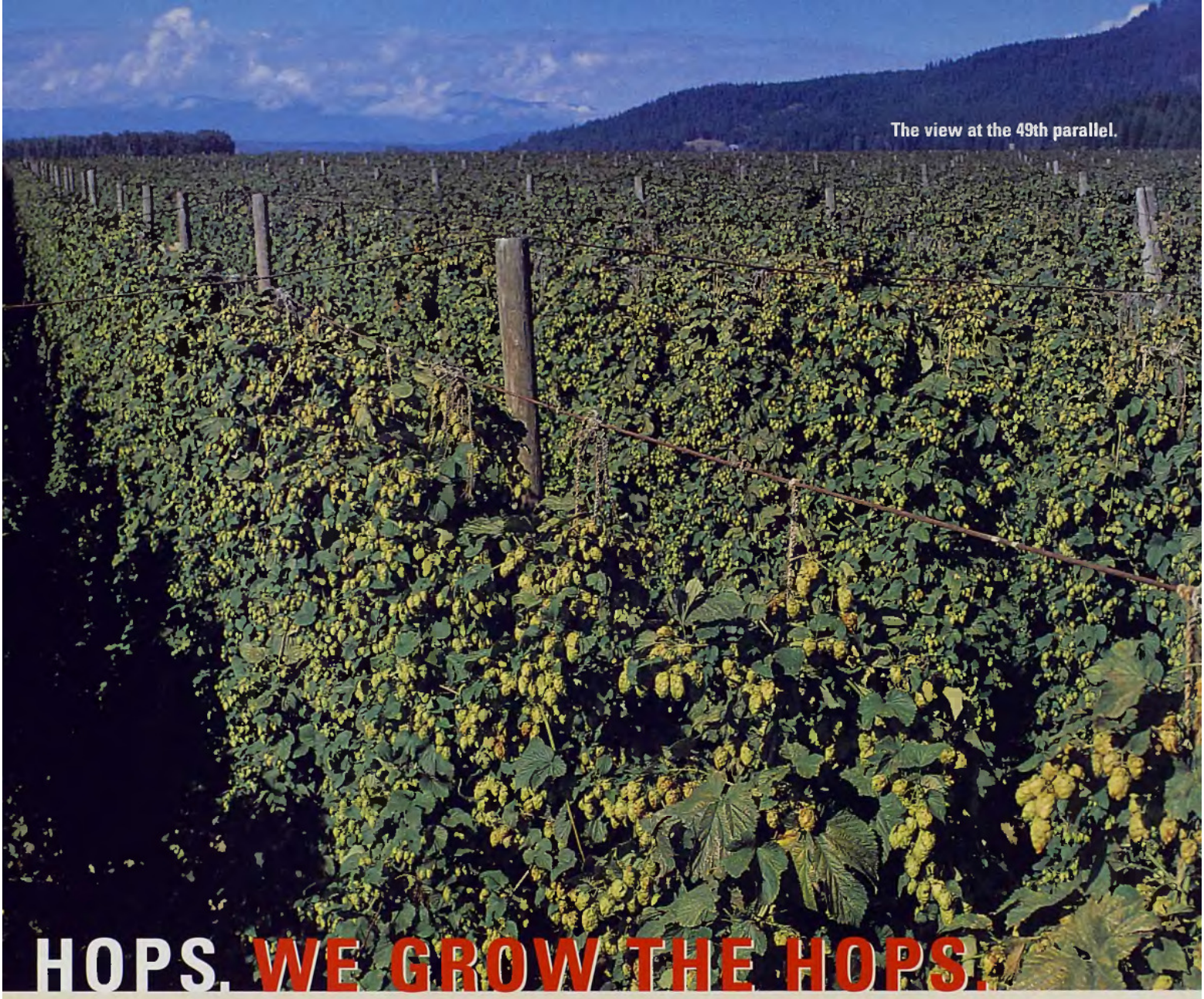

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sunday, march 5, 9pm/8c

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Playbill

THREE DAYS THAT shook the world press. Last year Contributing Editor **Lawrence Grobel** spent half a week talking to charismatic governor **Jesse Ventura.** Tag teaming with Executive Editor **Stephen Randall,** he produced the most talked about *Playboy Interview* of 1999. Hypocritical columnists railed about Ventura's comments on religion; paper-thin anchors attacked his views on fat. To bring the interview in at weight, we had to leave a lot on the table. So belly up to *Jesse II* (complete with line drawing by **David Levine**) for more straight talk from the interview sessions. Read how Ventura scared De Niro and how a friend of his made Steven Seagal piss his pants.

She's not Chevy, she's **Caprice.** A whimsical beauty and former Wonderbra model, Caprice sold *tonnes* of magazines as a cover girl in Europe. Now she's on display here—on our cover and in a nonpareil pictorial by **Willy Camden.**

Now that your heart is racing, it's time to rev another fantasy. *Let's Go Racing* by **Michael Jordan** is the answer to your 200-mile-an-hour dreams. Jordan deconstructs Formula One, Nascar and open-wheel roadsters, then hails supercharged female fans who have a special way of flagging drivers. In all, our package has better vibes than an in-car camera at the Indy 500. Fast cars, faster women: To sustain the adrenaline rush, turn to our second episode of *City Girls* by **Amy Sohn.** Reader response to Sohn's first group chat with four single women was terrific. This month take a New York minute and learn about pussy combs, airstrips and Purell. It's all about getting clean enough for dirty sex.

All you need to be a TV host these days is a desk and a mug and a pencil to bang on both. Yet **Jon Stewart** hit the chair on *The Daily Show With Jon Stewart* and actually made telling jokes into the camera seem funny again. In this month's *Playboy Interview* by **David Rensin,** Stewart riffs on the usual subjects—celebs, politics, cheese—and employs the kinetic wit that makes his show a success. His version of a Ventura-style inflammatory remark? "I fuck raccoons." As a lagniappe to hardworking Rensin, we sent him after **Cindy Margolis,** the subject of this issue's *20 Questions*. It's all part of our scheme to make Cindy feel at home here. She's already at home on the web—she has 60 million cyberbuddies. "If I ever do nudity," she promises, "it will be for PLAYBOY." (See? It's working!)

Ah, the naked city. Throw on your raincoat and slouch over to the cineplex. Thanks to such movies as *Zero Effect* and *Eye of the Beholder*, private dicks are again public heroes. **Dick Lochte** researched the boom for us and came back with cheap scotch on his breath and the article *The Return of the Private Eye* (illustrated by **Phil Hale**). Now that we've whetted your appetite for adventure, turn to *Monkey Forest Road* by **Tom Paine** (the dramatic artwork is by **Marshall Arisman**). The short story, set in Bali, is a woolly frame tale about trying to build a hotel but succumbing to the jungle instead.

Even Hollywood knows it: The best (and most profitable) releases of last year were independent films. Got a *Blair Witch* you want to scratch? First read our essential production notes, *How to Be an Indie Movie Mogul*, by **Ted C. Fishman.** Pick up some of the gear and maybe you'll get your girlfriend to star. Our other schemes for self-improvement are at your feet: *Moon Walk* is a review of tomorrow's space-age sneaks. *Extreme Yoga* by **Joe Dolce** takes things a bit deeper. It's a full-body workout, as is our *Mardi Gras 2000* pictorial. We flashed some beads, and female tourists flashed back. Talk about the blue bayou. And don't neglect Playmate **Nicole Marie Lenz.** Never mind Fishman—she'll turn you into a Lenz man.

VENTURA, GROBEL

LEVINE

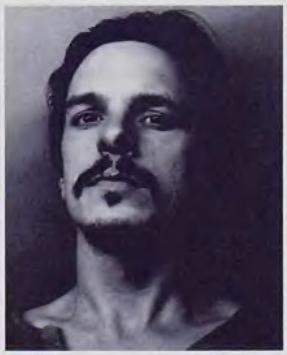
CAMDEN

JORDAN

SOHN

RENSIN

LOCHTE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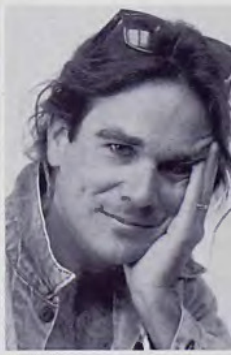
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122 20Q **CINDY MARGOLIS**
With 60 million cyberbuddies, she has enough viewers to rival the Super Bowl. Her appearance on Howard Stern's show was his highest-rated episode ever. And her bikini poster cured a terminally ill teenager. Imagine what a downloaded Cindy will do for you. **BY DAVID RENSIN**

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Science fiction flicks always have the coolest props—and the guns are the best of all. We've rounded up classic blasters from Star Wars and Planet of the Apes as well as the latest stuff. (Take you to our leader? Sorry, he's busy with the twins.)

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Seeing this cover girl and former Wanderbra model show up at the British National Television Awards in a see-through Versace gown was reason enough to watch British TV. Turns out Caprice saved her steamiest appearance ever for a PLAYBOY pictorial. The full manty? Bloody right, waxes our Rabbit.

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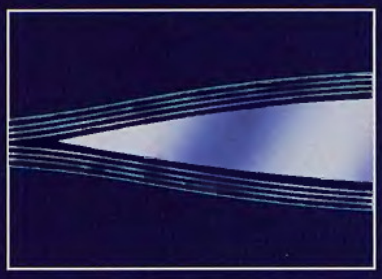

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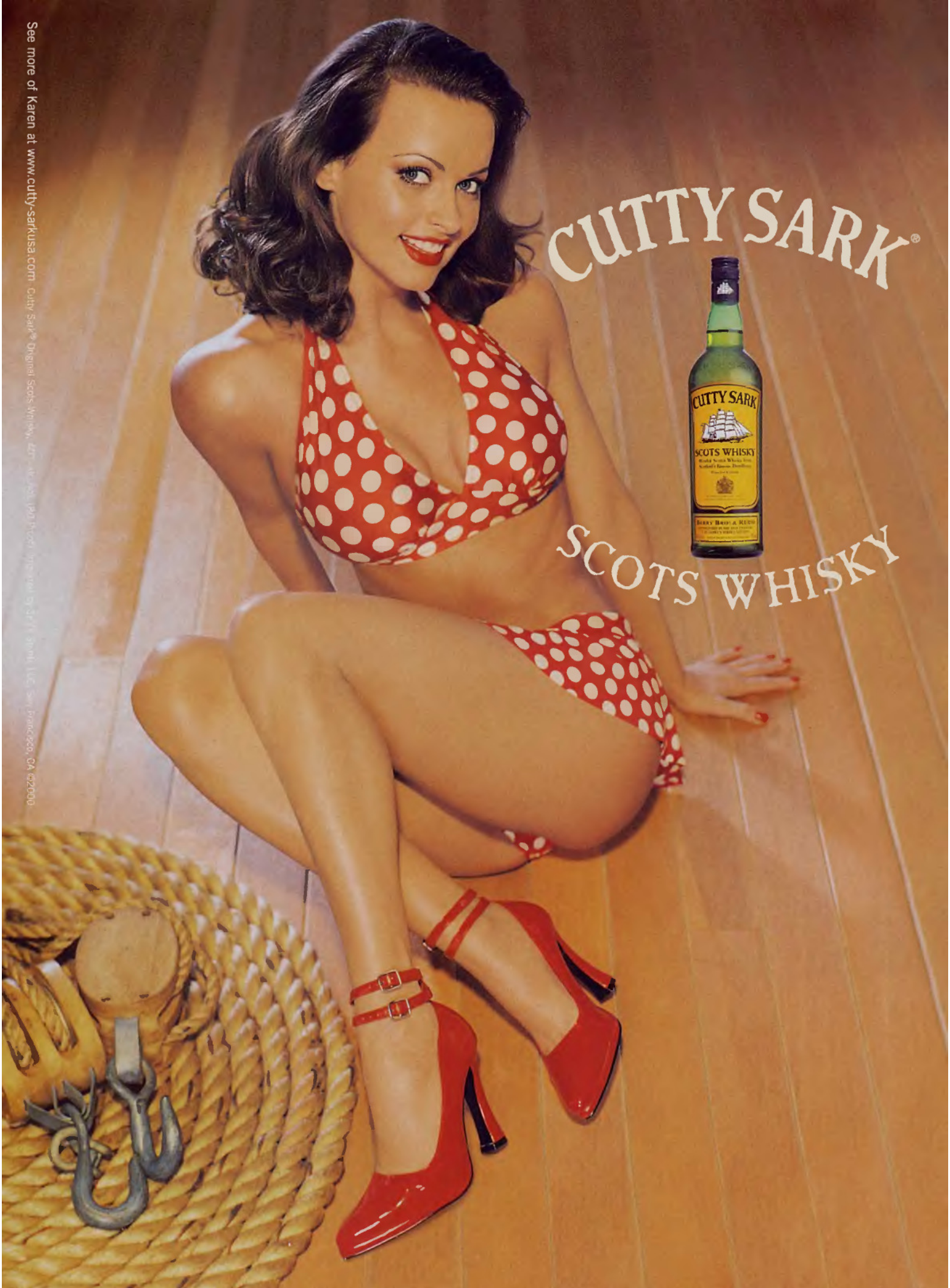
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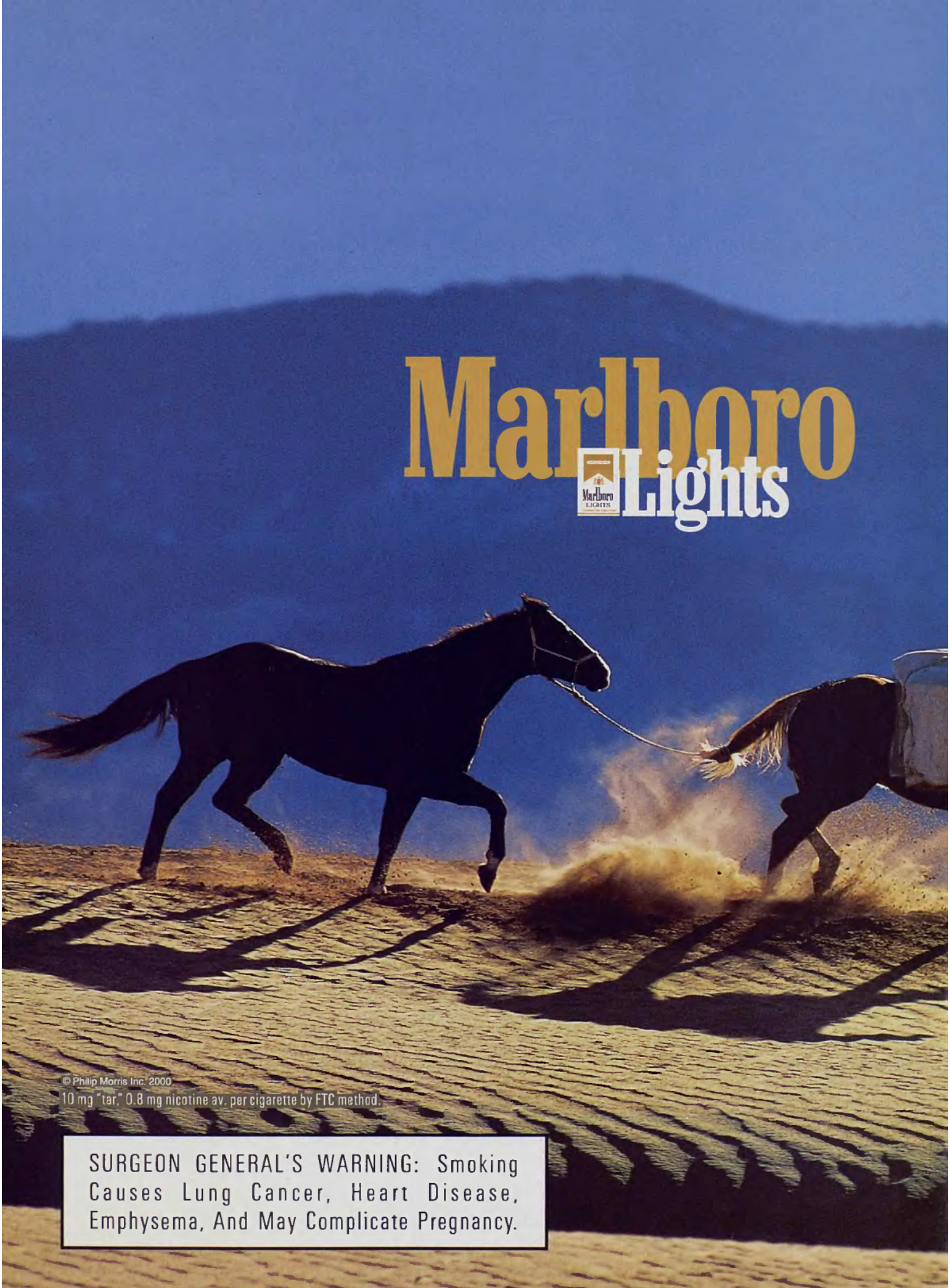
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THE DOCTOR IS IN

Playmates Victoria Zdrok and Rachel Jeán Marteen (below) had their pulses checked by Dr. Ruth at the book party for Senior Staff Writer James R. Petersen's *The Century of Sex* at Elaine's in New York City. Is this covered by your HMO?

MONSTERS AT THE MANSION

Things went bump in the night when Hef hosted his annual Halloween party. First, he offered Hannibal Lecter a finger sandwich. Then Lauren Holly (below) took a night off from surgery on *Chicago Hope* to treat the Beast. But for someone so famous for slaying vampires, Buffy (Sarah Michelle Gellar, right) seemed unexpectedly nervous about her companion.

ANNIE SHOOTS HEF FOR *VANITY FAIR*

Hef and three of the special ladies in his life—Sandy, Mandy and Brande—look over some test shots taken by celebrity photographer Annie Leibovitz while posing for the 1999 Hall of Fame portfolio for the December issue of *Vanity Fair*. The result? Perfectly sexy, we think.

OUR VIP TURNS UP ON PAM'S *VIP*

What a way to end the year: In the season's last episode, Pamela Anderson celebrates the arrival of the new millennium with Hef at the Playboy Mansion along with fellow *VIP* cast members Leah Lail, Molly Culver and Shaun Baker. We'll lift a glass to that great event, too.

HENNER PLAYS BUNNY MOTHER

Former LA Bunny Mother Judi Bradford offers Marilu Henner tips for her role in ABC TV's *Bunny Ears* over lunch at the Playboy Mansion.

HAUNTED HOUSE PARTY

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With a haunted forest inspired by *The Blair Witch Project*, and costumes from *Frankenstein* and *The Exorcist*, Hef's bash was the Halloween party of the millennium. (1) Hef and his gal pals as pussycats, She-Ra and Jessica Rabbit. (2) Lou "the Hulk" Ferrigno and wife, Carla. (3) Aliens from *Mars Attacks!* (4) It's the Yankees versus the Red Sox for Patrick Whitesell and Ben Affleck. (5) A dancing reveler flashes her buns. (6) Sarah Michelle Gellar and pals get a scare when Freddy Krueger comes to life in the Mansion museum. (7) Monstrous, fire-breathing gargoyles perch atop the Mansion. (8) Teenage witch Melissa Joan Hart, Danielle Fishel and Nate Richert. (9) Model Eden Orfanos is sleek in silver. (10) Thora Birch does the man thing. (11) She's back! Heidi Fleiss and Hef. (12) Leslie Stefanson and masked man James Woods. (13) Tom Arnold thinks Freddy should get his nails done. (14) Nancy Valen and Shana Van Patten shake their booties.

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HOUSE PARTY
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(1) Thumbs-up for Oscar De La Hoya in his rematch with Felix Trinidad. (2) Janet Pilgrim poses as the Playboy Rabbit with Mr. Playboy. (3) A totally nude Lauren Hays is covered with leopard spots by artist Tyson Fontaine. (4) The alien from *Alien*. (5) Julie Strain busts out. (6) Eva Halina and Christopher Rich. (7) Quentin Tarantino braves the hall of horrible heads. (8) Danielle Fishel and Ben Savage. (9) Scott Baio, Jeanette Jonsson and the ubiquitous Freddy. (10) Lite Silver, Jason Swing and Lisa Donatz arrest bad boy Andy Dick. (11) Carrie Stevens and Bijou Phillips hug the host. (12) *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*'s Alyson Hannigan and Hef. (13) Travis Andres, Scott Caan and Shane Powers. (14) Corey Feldman and Frankie give peace a chance. (15) Fabio and Roseanne.

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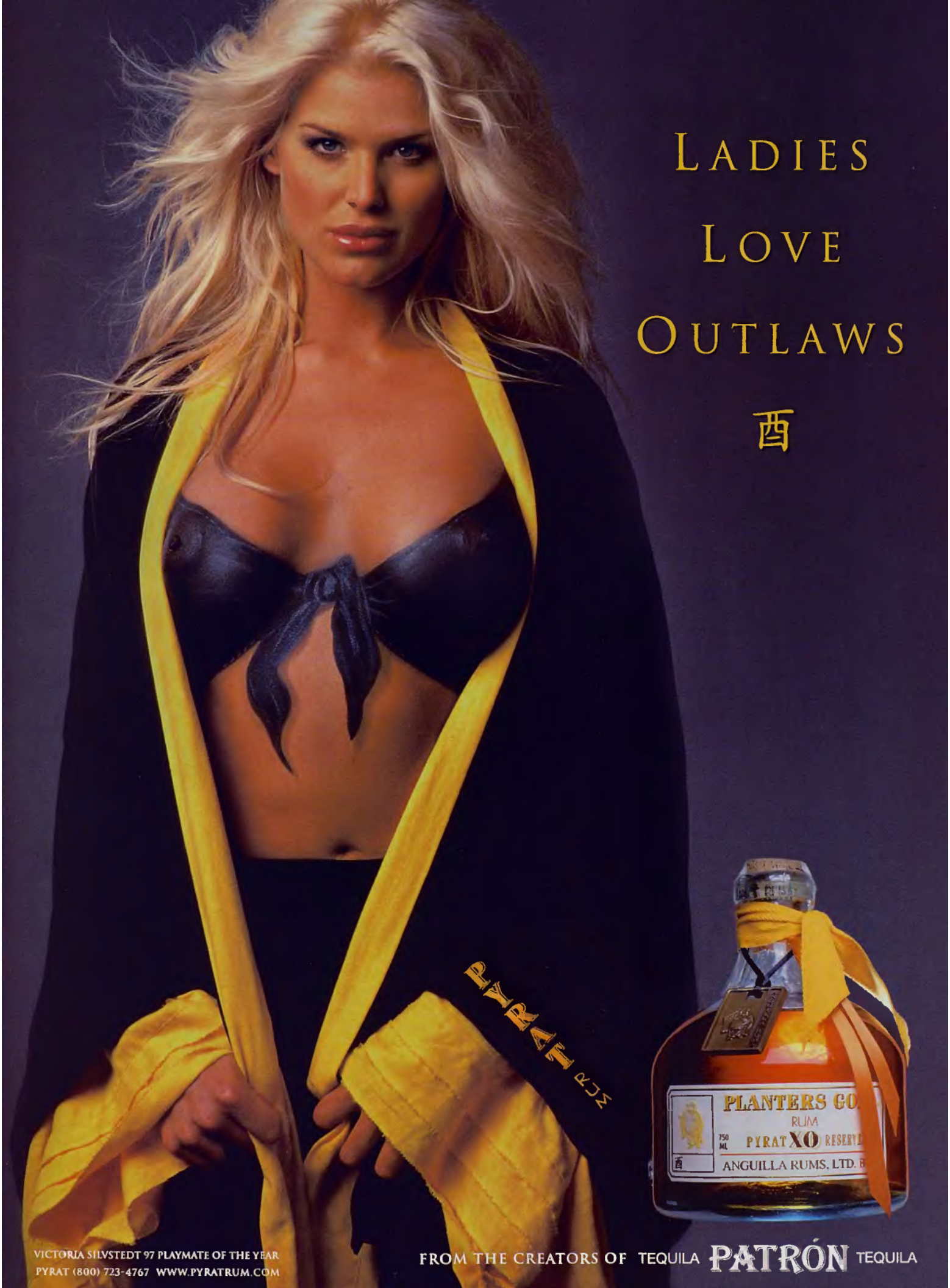
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Dear Playboy

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HUNTING FOR GOOD WILL

In a profession that seems to attract some of the most shallow people, Ben Affleck (*Playboy Interview*, December) has strength of character. It's nice to know that all actors aren't obsessed with power, prestige and money.

Alycia Ernst
Phoenix, Arizona

Despite Ben's attempts to skirt marriage, he is a great catch.

Sarah Gibson
Chicago, Illinois

LOVE THAT SEARCH

The gala Christmas issue of PLAYBOY nearly made my heart give out. The next time you feature this many fabulous women in one month (*Playboy 2000 Playmate Search*, December), please give your readers a heads-up.

John Knapp
Vancouver, Washington

The Playboy Search Bus turned up a number of gorgeous women, but Katie Hammers bowls me over.

Kenneth Todd
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Playmate 2000 hopefuls Katie Lohmann's and Regina Usvjat's piercings have broken through one of the last anatomical taboos. Their choice of genital jewelry is the highlight of your busman's holiday pictorial.

Ken Carpenter
Orlando, Florida

You must make San Francisco's Barbara Adi a Playmate—and soon. Please don't make me wait another millennium.

Daniel Welch
Wheaton, Illinois

Here's hoping that Casey Ross will be in the class of 2000 Playmates.

Cash Cooke
Mondovi, Wisconsin

WAR—WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

I applaud Buzz McClain's movie choices in "Bringing the War Home" (*Video*, December). But he left out two films that capture the pathos of our century at war: *Das Boot*, the sublime and agonizing depiction of German submariners at war, and *Apocalypse Now*, Francis Coppola's vision of the absurd but heroic war in which I fought. I hope our next president watches both films.

John Coleman
Oxnard, California

SWING OUT, SISTER

The next time PLAYBOY plans to review a swing club ("The Swinging Scene," December), the editors should assign the job to a real swinger. For an accurate picture, your *Sex* columnist Amanda Green should have attended Le Trapeze on a Friday or Saturday night, when there are often more than 100 couples enjoying full-swap, large-scale group orgies, rampant female bisexuality and an occasional gang bang. I've been to the club a dozen times, and Green must be the only person ever to visit the ladies' room to undress.

Rockwell Upman
White Plains, New York

REUNITED AND IT FEELS SO GOOD

The Playmate Reunion photograph featuring more than 150 Centerfolds (December) is remarkable. Has so much mind-boggling beauty ever before been assembled at the same time in the same place? I'm sure I'm not the only person who tried to identify each one of the Playmates.

Lanny Middings
San Ramon, California

WHO READS PLAYBOY?

While helping a neighbor pack for a move, my ten-year-old-grandson, Bobby, spotted a copy of PLAYBOY and said, "I'll take that." My neighbor responded, "I'm not sure I should let you have it."

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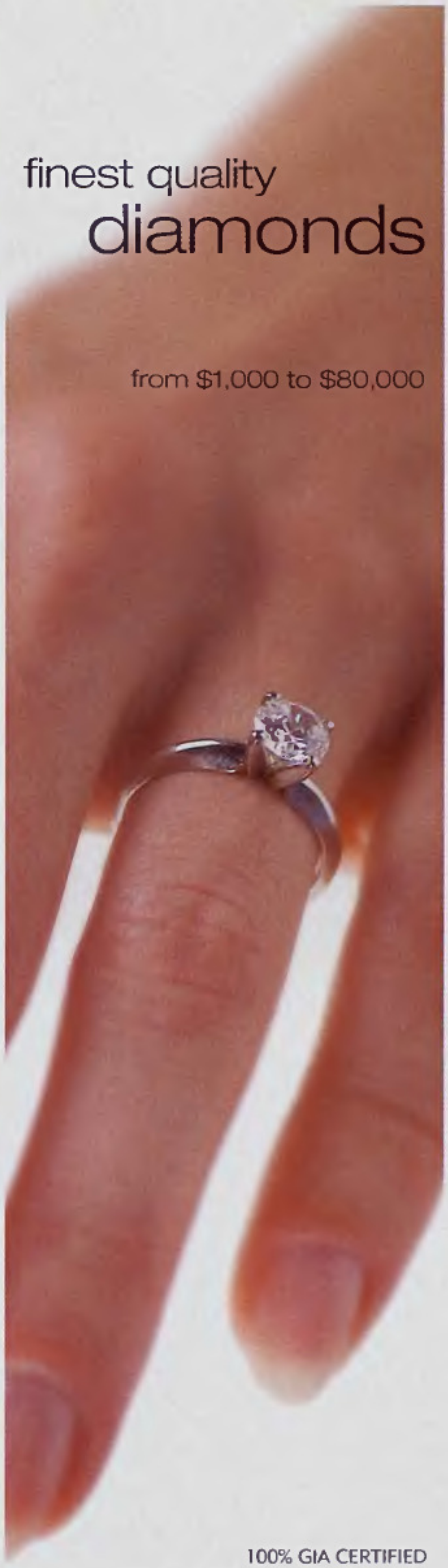

Bobby quickly replied, "It's OK. I'll be like Grandma and just read the articles."

Betty Newell
Gadsen, Alabama

PIE IN THE SKY

Actress Shannon Elizabeth set off sexual fireworks in 1999—both in PLAYBOY (August) and in an erotic and humorous scene in *American Pie*. I was sure she'd make your list in *Sex Stars 1999* (December). I can't believe this incredible woman didn't make the cut.

John Wyant
Manchester, New Hampshire

JAZZ ROYALTY

I enjoyed the article on Duke Ellington (*The Duke*, December) by Wynton Marsalis, but I have a quibble. Marsalis should give the *Ellington at Newport* album a listen—specifically the *Diminuendo in Blue/Crescendo in Blue*. Then maybe he can tell me where the jazz stops and the classical begins. Perhaps we just have too many labels for good music.

A.J. Sprague
Costa Mesa, California

NOTHING BUT NET

How did Gary Cole overlook Purdue in his college hoops article (*Playboy's College Basketball Preview*, December)? I am shocked at the omission. You may have already guessed that I'm a Purdue graduate and a big fan. But school pride aside, this is a team that went to the Sweet 16 in last year's NCAA tournament, has the entire starting team back this season and has ranked in the top 25 of most other polls I've seen. Maybe your sports editor is a Hoosier.

Jim Simpson
New York, New York

Every knowledgeable college basketball fan has one man on his all-American team: University of Maryland's Terence Morris. But PLAYBOY didn't place him on either the first or second team. He's even a preseason favorite to win the Naismith Award and the Wooten Award for college basketball player of the year. Why exclude him?

Mark Alfaro
Sanford, North Carolina

STILL WATERS RUN DEEP

I first spotted Brooke Richards in *Girls of Hawaiian Tropic* (July) and knew that she'd be a Playmate (*Melting Brooke*, December). But why only five nude pictures of her? Your readers deserve more.

Scott Dunlap
Willows, California

After teasing us for so long with numerous Newsstand Specials and the *Hawaiian Tropic* pictorial in which Brooke appeared, you delivered the goods.

Joel Rheaume
Sandys Parish, Bermuda

The world can't come to an end—at least not until June, so that I may see the beautiful Brooke Richards crowned Playmate of the Year.

Benjamin Filiponi
Tulare, California

I had the pleasure of meeting Brooke when she was at a magazine signing at the Booksmith in Seneca, South Carolina. She was personable, charming and gracious. She's also every bit as beautiful as she appears in her photographs. PLAYBOY must be proud of this delightful young woman.

Martin Keene
Greenville, South Carolina

Photographer Stephen Wayda did a fabulous job with Brooke Richards, but what happened to the rest of the roll of film? Your pictorial wasn't nearly long enough for such a beautiful Playmate.

Bill Hatfield
Silver Creek, New York

Wow, Brooke Richards in a G-string—that is the best photo you have ever published.

Shane Summers
Stillwater, Oklahoma

CAMPBELL IN THE SOUP

Naomi Campbell (December) is my favorite supermodel. I was certainly thrilled to see her on the cover of PLAYBOY's holiday issue, but I was disappointed that we were never given a glimpse of her beautiful derriere. Naomi has one of the best backsides in the modeling biz.

Edmund D'Antonio
Suffern, New York

Is that a space person of the female persuasion chasing Naomi, or am I having another one of my fantasies?

Gary Mitchell
Lincolnwood, Illinois

Artist extraordinaire David LaChapelle has been a favorite photographer of mine for years, and it's great to see PLAYBOY highlight his talents. I hope you'll continue to take chances like this in the future.

Jen Cray
DeLand, Florida

Your Naomi Campbell pictorial shows why only certain models are considered super.

Richard Schuh
Rhinelander, Wisconsin

If the definition of a supermodel is draping sheer costumes over a stick figure that stands 5'10" and emotes on cue, then Campbell fits the bill.

Bill Burns
Sicklerville, New Jersey

Not one picture of Naomi's beautiful bottom. My God, what was the photographer thinking? I feel betrayed, bewildered, cheated.

Joe Adaszynski
Burnaby, British Columbia

BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG CITY

I found the oral-sex discussion in *City Girls* (December) interesting and fun, and was surprised to discover the author is Amy Sohn, whom I have read in the *New York Post*. I was happy to see her pop up in PLAYBOY.

Steve Devereaux
New York, New York

You're in luck. Amy Sohn pops up again on page 127.

It's my greatest hope that women talk that way in real life. But it's a scientific fact that the mouth has more bacteria than any other orifice.

S. Weiss
Martinez, California

By chance I picked up my boyfriend's copy of the December PLAYBOY and read *City Girls*. It sounds to me like those women are saying oral and anal sex are dirty. I have to disagree with that. Maybe, as in my case, they just need to meet the right guy.

Elizabeth Carr
Portland, Oregon

HAND JIVE

Asa Baber's November *Men* column ("Not the Turkey") about masturbating with inanimate objects made me laugh until I cried. It was great, and I've been walking around with the issue, making everyone read it. Thanks again for making those of us who actually read the articles feel proud.

Vida Novak
Cleveland, Ohio

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PLAYBOY after hours

A GUY'S GUIDE TO WHAT'S HIP AND WHAT'S HAPPENING

RHYTHM AND BOOBS

Trash-blues artist Bob Log III uses a literal interpretation of the term stripped-down blues on his new solo album, *Trike* (Fat Possum). According to the liner notes, Log's rhythm section consists of two "professional women." Log paid his ladyfriends to smack their breasts for the percussive element on songs such as *Clap Your Tits* and *Booby Trap*. The album also features six 20-second "clapping" interludes, which provide an interesting counterpoint to Log's feverish slide guitar. Appropriately, he has termed the new style of blues "guitar and tit duets."

ROYAL SEND-OFF

The readers of the *Mirror* awoke to this long-anticipated headline: THE QUEEN IS DEAD. The paper was noting the death of gay bon vivant Quentin Crisp.

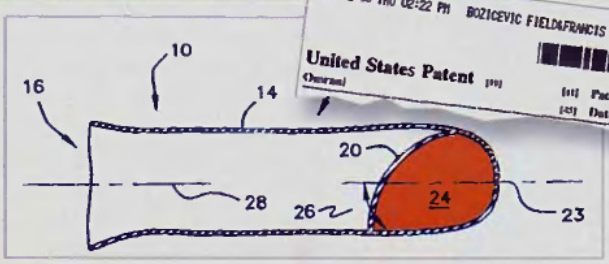
LAST WORD

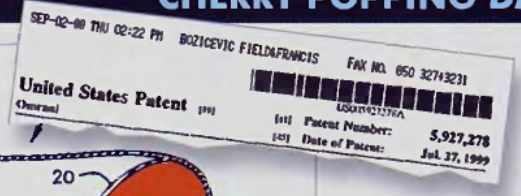
We like to collect notes of resignation, particularly when they are full of moxie. As a parting shot to his employer, Shane Ham, segment producer for the *McLaughlin Group*, decided to share his exit memo with *The Washington Post*. It reads, in part: "Like the heroes of folklore who went on a difficult journey to face down a foul and evil monster, I have stretched my capacity for abuse and denigration as far as I can go. You are truly a giant among men, combining the language of Richard Nixon in his prime and the mental capacity of Ronald Reagan in his current state. I am absolutely certain that I will never again meet a grown man who behaves as you do, and I'm grateful for that. In ten long months you and your lovely wife have given me many years' worth of anecdotes with which to amaze and amuse my friends." Ham, it must be said, had been warned of John McLaughlin's notoriously mercurial behavior before he accepted the job. But, he points out, "the difference between hearing stories about John McLaughlin and actually working for him is the difference between watching *Saving Private Ryan* and landing on D-Day."

THIS IS ONE FAN CLUB WE'D LIKE TO JOIN

You don't see much fon doncing these days, but thot's only one reason this picture of model Shirley Mollmonn caught our eye. She appeors courtesy of Schirmer-Mosel's just-published collection of fabulous photos *Die neuen Pirelli-Kalender 1994–1999*.

CHERRY POPPING DADDY




SEP-02-99 THU 02:22 PM BOZICEVIC FIELD&FRANCIS FAX NO. 650 32743231
United States Patent
Patent Number: 5,927,278
Date of Patent: Jul. 27, 1999

Attention nervous brides: If a thoughtful New Jersey inventor has his way, it may one doy be possible for even the most sexually experienced woman to wave bedsheets proudly on her wedding day. A condom simulating virginity (patent number 5,927,278) is pending approvol from the U.S. Potent Office. The sheath has o hidden chamber that releases red dye during sex. It's designed for cultures that prize virginity in females—and countries where men aren't too fost, either.

RAW DATA

SIGNIFICA, INSIGNIFICA, STATS AND FACTS

QUOTE

"I think there is a world market for maybe five computers."—THOMAS WATSON, PRESIDENT OF IBM IN 1943

TRAVEL DOT COM

The number of Americans who have booked travel online: 11 million. The percentage increase over previous year: 80.

GENDER ENDER

Percentage of U.S. women who believe a woman will be elected president in the next ten years: 68. Percentage of men who think so: 56. Proportion of women who say they would vote for a woman: 4 in 5. Proportion of men: 4 in 5. Number of nations that have already elected a woman president: 22.

CALAMITY BILL

Number of states that President Clinton has declared disaster areas since taking office: 31.

PRISON ISSUE

Number of inmates fatally shot by guards at California prisons in the past decade: 39. Of all shootings of inmates in California by guards, percentage that a Corrections Department panel ruled to be unjustified: 80. Number of new prisons that have been built in the U.S. during the past 20 years: 1000.

STACKED ODDS

Number of bookstores operated by Barnes and Noble in the U.S.: 987. Total number of independent bookstores that are members of the American Booksellers Association: 3400.

SLOTS, MATEY?

Percentage of the world's video poker machines that are situated in Australia: 21. Percentage of world population accounted for by Australia: 1. Amount of money per year that Australians lose while gambling: $7.25 billion. Ratio of gambling losses to amount spent on power and fuel: 2 to 1.

STEVE TURK

FACT OF THE MONTH

According to *Useless Sexual Trivia*, the term used to describe a whale's penis is dork—also the origin of the contemporary insult.

BANK KINGS

Ranked by 1998 total assets, number of the world's ten largest banks that are in the U.S.: 2. Number of biggest banks in Japan: 2. In Germany: 1. In France: 1. UK: 1.

EXTRA CREDIT

Portion of American college students who own at least one credit card: 6 in 10. Portion who don't pay off their monthly balance: 1 in 3. Portion of students who carry debt of more than $3000: 1 in 4.

CONGRESSIONAL RECORDS

According to the Capital Hill Blue website, number of 535 members of Congress who have been accused of spousal abuse: 29. Number who were stopped for drunk driving in 1998: 84. Number who have been arrested for shoplifting: 8. Number who have been arrested for fraud: 7. Number who have been arrested for assault: 3.

D.C. BADGERS

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, amount corporations paid lobbyists in Washington, D.C. in 1998: $1.42 billion. Number of registered lobbyists: 20,512. Number of lobbyists per each of the 535 members of Congress: 38.

NECKING IN THE DARK

Percentage of sexually active high school students who do not know that they can obtain birth control pills without their parents' permission: 46. Percentage unaware they can buy condoms without permission: 21.

FAMILY BUSINESS

Number of Chicago Mayor Richard M. Daley's relatives on public payrolls since he took office in 1989: 68.

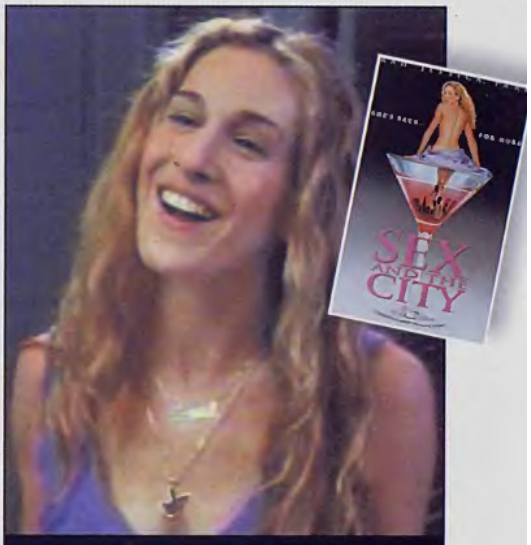
—PAUL ENGLEMAN

YOU KNOW HUE YOU ARE

A municipal judge in Santa Fe, New Mexico requires those sentenced to perform community service to do so while wearing a special hat. Each hat is color-coordinated to correspond to the nature of the offense. Blue (the color of bruises) signifies domestic violence, while green (as in cash) identifies shoplifters. Everyone's favorite is the brown hat. It indicates that the offender owns a dog and will forever after be more inclined to carry plastic bags on walks.

BORSCHT BELTWAY

We knew Al Gore couldn't be this funny. First came news reports that the vice president had members of the United Jewish Communities laughing at his shtick. Then we got a call from our friends at Top Five (topfive.com). For the record, Alpha Al's jokes were not from his Wolf pack of advisors but from Top Five's list of Jewish country-and-western songs. Gore's favorites included *I Was One of the Chosen People (Till She Chose Somebody Else)*, *I've Got My Foot on the Glass—Where Are You?*, *The Second Time She Said Shalom I Knew She Meant Goodbye* and *Mamas Don't Let Your Ungrateful Sons Grow Up to Be Cowboys When They Could Very Easily Just Have Taken Over the Family Hardware Business That My Grandfather Broke His Back to Start and My Father Sweated Over for Years Which Apparently Doesn't Mean Anything Now That You're Turning Your Back on Such a Gift.*



RABBIT SPOTTING

It's Hef's world ond we're just living in it. Attentive viewers picked up on the Robbit Head neckloce Soroh Jessica Parker wore in our fovorite episode of *Sex and the City*. Turns out it's o lucky chorm. We heor thot Porker is directing some new episodes. We wotch her closely onywoy, but this yeor we're going to be paying porticular attention to her cleavoge ond points just obove.

A few insights into the dreams of men.

Yes, men dream in color.

The average male only remembers 62% of his dreams.

5% of all men have a recurring nightmare.

Every man gets aroused at least once per night.

Those who appreciate quality enjoy it responsibly.

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NY FETISH NIGHTS

Into latex, D&S or goth? New Yorkers are. You can dial the fetish party hotline (212-946-1776) or consult our map for the best in downtown domination.

1. **Mother:** Host to Click and Drag (cyberlatex) and Long Black Veil (goth) nights (432 W. 14th).
2. **Hellfire:** All D&S, all the time. Our zoological favorite: Bald Beaver night (28 Ninth Ave.).
3. **Maison de Sade:** Bondage theme restaurant. Use your fork (206 W. 23rd).
4. **La Nouvelle Justine:** Yet another place to eat and spank (101 E. 2nd).
5. **Eulenspiegal Society:** Nightly support groups. D&S with a happy face (24 Bond).
6. **Never:** The Xorvia Society takes over one night per week for Smack (245 E. Houston).
7. **Alphabet Lounge:** Home to Baroness' Fashion Retinue. Late-night latex (Ave. C and East 7th).
8. **Pyramid:** Ancient club periodically hosts Sabreteeth-adorned goths (101 Ave. A).
9. **Raven:** Hmm. Big black bird. Goth? You guessed it (194 Ave. A).
10. **Paddles:** Elaborate, almost elegant fetish playground (15 W. 18th).
11. **Purple Passion:** Latex store serves as source for events (242 W. 16th).

Off the map: Contact Nutcracker (212-674-2294) and Pandora's Box (212-242-4577) for parties.

THE TIP SHEET

Vin Diesel—New action hero. Rode the buzz from cyberspace to outer space thanks to science fiction thriller *Pitch Black*.

Jock gamblers—Our favorite sports hero dropped $450,000 one night in Las Vegas. He told management he'd pay the money and never return to the casino, or he'd pay $250,000 and come back soon. The casino took the lesser amount.

Mung—Campus slang for the black gunk on the floor at big parties: a sour mix of beer, ash, dirt and urine.

Fudge Tunnel and friends—Bands that want to be bad start with the name: Alcoholocaust, Armageddon Dildos, Cervix Couch, Smegma, JonBenet Ramsey and Foreskin 500. Props to Anal Cunt for the song title *I Sold Your Dog to a Chinese Restaurant*.

Celebrities with sexy toes—A Profoot Care Products survey asked people to pick the star with the sexiest feet. The list included Sharon Stone, Pamela Lee Anderson, Michelle Pfeiffer—what was the question again?

The Crocodile Hunter—Discovery Channel's Steve Irwin is immortalized in Claymation. He's *Mad TV*'s Mr. Bill.

Virgin Suicides soundtrack—Original score by Air is even sexier than the film's star, Kirsten Dunst.

ATMVision—Specially equipped teller machines near cineplexes play movie trailers. The new $20 bills feature President Daffy Duck.

Whipped—Quick indie film with this great line: "She could suck a cab driver through immigration."

Short money—"I'm not into short money," she said when we ran out of money to buy drinks. Then she left.

Philippe Starck's plans for new tampon—Perfect follow-up to his juicer.

The f-bomb—New sports cliché is a jock euphemism for the word fuck. "Coach threw the f-bomb around after we lost."

Bigwords.com—The Amazon of college textbooks.

IBERIAN HOT POTATOE

At least they know how to spell Port and Madeira. Portugal recalled 5000 of its new 100-escudo coins because craftsmen at the national mint misspelled the country's name, Republica Portuguesa, as Portugusa. A Portuguese embassy official put the proper spin on the debacle: "It's a sensitive issue."

JUST LIKE BRAND NUDE

We note with pleasure that the Bare Buns Family Nudist Club, an organization in the greater Washington, D.C.–Baltimore area that has 235 members,

BABE OF THE MONTH

Almost 300 people a day hop aboord Babe of the Month **Mimi Macpherson's** party boat in Hervey Bay, Australia for a six-hour tour. But instead of paying to sail the seas with the best-looking environmentalist on the planet, the good folks are actually watching humpback whales frolic in shallow tropical waters. That's fine with Mimi (the knockout younger sister of supermodel Elle Macpherson), who's been running her Whale Watch operation since 1989. Although the young entrepreneur followed her sister into modeling and even did a guest stint on *Baywatch*, Macpherson's primary concern has olways been ocean conservation. Given her affinity for glue-on beachwear ond her intense interest in protecting the natural habitat, we support oll of Mimi's wildlife endeavors—whatever form they may take.

SURF AND THE CITY

Forget driving to the beach and waiting for swells. The crowd above is enjoying the latest extreme water sport in the landlocked German burg of Munich. Surfers (such as Kelly Slater), snowboarders, windsurfers and street skaters all agree that the Wavelach—a portable wave machine—is a blast. Constructed from faur shipping containers, the device fashions a standing ten-foot wave from 500,000 liters af water spewed at 95,000 liters per minute. Next stop on the Swatch watch–spansared Waveloch tour: the Sydney Summer Olympics, where wave riders will shaw the world how to shoot the tube in a tub.

recently held its annual clothing drive. According to *The Washington Post*, club president Gary Brown said, "We're always looking for ways we can be involved in the community, and it gives us a good feeling." Despite the excitement of the moment, he managed to keep on his last pair of pants.

SEEING DOG'S EYES

Tomi Suchy, a Czech optician, has designed a line of sunglasses for dogs—and not just because he wants those canine to enter the ranks of cool. Several breeds—Boston terriers and Saint Bernards, for example—are susceptible to eye problems, and the new shades shield sensitive eyes from harmful rays. The name of the line of glasses? Phydeaux, of course.

FOLLOW THE MONEY

The Fed talks a lot about money in circulation, but Colleen Marsala is actually doing something about it. She writes www.wheresgeorge.com on all her money. Then she records the serial number of the bill on the website and waits to see if and when the bill shows up. If you come across a bill that has the URL on it, log onto the site and record where you got it. Marsala says, "I've seen mine spent in bars and fast-food places. One was used to pay for a hooker." The site's creator claims 3.5 percent of the bills are tracked. The rest of the money ends up in pockets of people who have lives.

JUST DID IT

Is that Evander Holyfield's ear in your mouth, or are you just happy to see me?

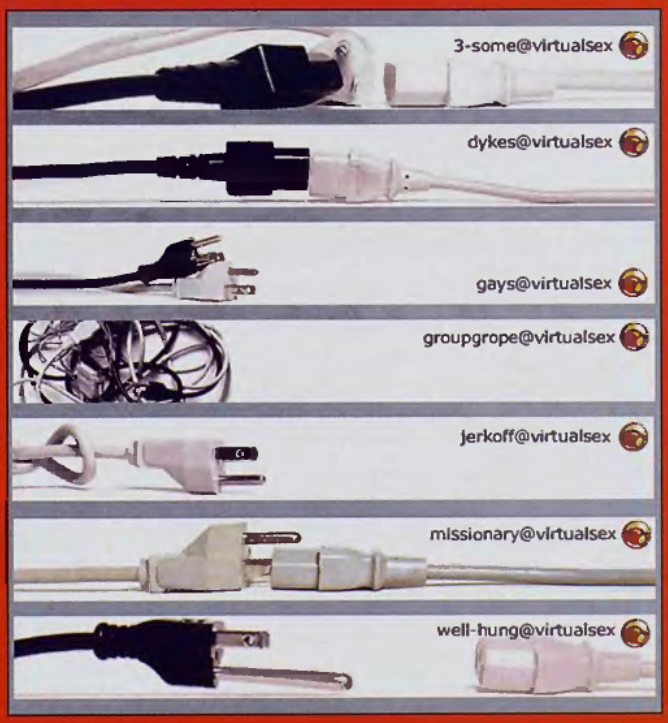
From *New Scientist* comes what may be the best news for athletes since the protective cup. All that advice to boxers about how women weaken the legs turns out to be a complete sackload. In reality, sexual activity boosts the male's testosterone level, leaving him infused with hormonal competitiveness, even into the next day. Turns out it's the postcoital cuddling that slows a man down.

TESTOSTEROSSA LEVELS

On the subject of the risks of "solitary pleasure," Vatican theologian Giordano Muraro noted that masturbation is akin to "having a Ferrari and driving only in first gear." He added that "running with the gearshift in first not only impedes the Ferrari from expressing all its power but also ruins it." We've yet to see the Popemobile lay some rubber.

PLUGGING AWAY IN BRAZIL

This is an ad far an Internet company aut of Brazil. When you see it on the riet (rockers.nu/trams/banners) it's animated, but we think you'll have na trouble getting the idea here. We believe this company is in the business af connecting computer systems together—hence having these electrical cords humping away is a way af saying the company can connect anybody any way they want it. Of course, the company could be in a completely different business. We just want to hire the ad agency.



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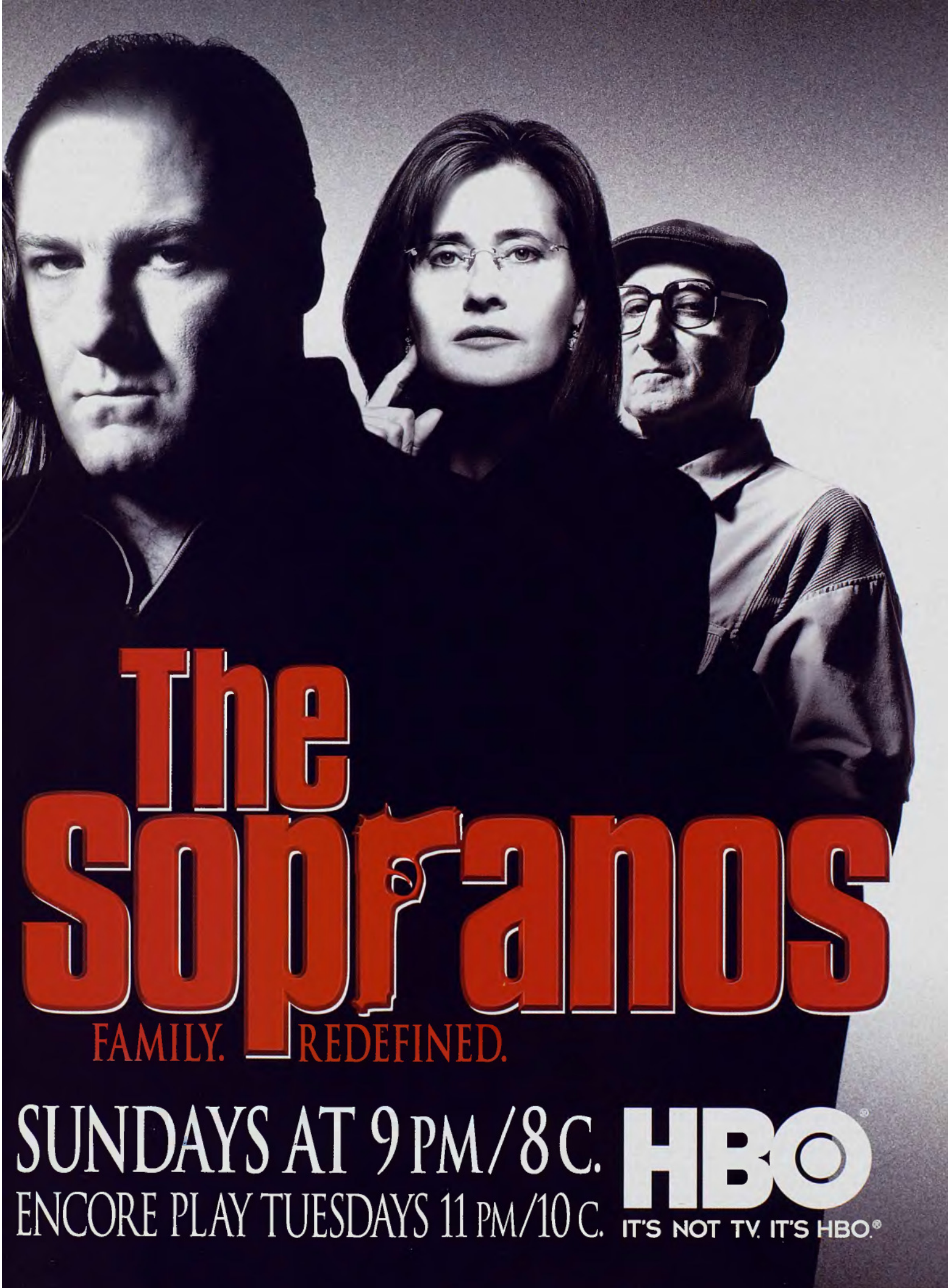
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music

ROCK

RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE'S ***The Battle of Los Angeles*** (Epic) marks a leap forward for rock-rap fusion. On guitar, Tom Morello has figured out how to fuse Jimmy Page with Terminator X of Public Enemy. And his band has come right along, shooting off almost as many sparks. The defining moment is the opening of *Sleep Now in the Fire*, which uses a Hendrix-like riff to set up a percussive explosion. Then Zack de la Rocha enters with a rant: "Crawl with me into tomorrow/Or I'll drag you to your grave." This is really the voice of Chuck D if he'd been raised on metal instead of funk. Embedded in this power is one of rock's true powerhouse rhythm sections, which fuses metal bashing to rap funkiness. Unlike other bands, Rage rants with a purpose. All of its music promotes social revolution to end injustice. This music isn't the ghost of Tom Joad. It's the appearance of his heirs. —DAVE MARSH

Add Alanis Morissette's ***MTV Unplugged*** (Maverick) to the short list of great *Unplugged* performances. Framed mostly by acoustic guitars, piano and strings, Alanis' naked songs of spiritual struggle and rebirth are even more cathartic than the electric versions on her two multiplatinum albums. There are four superb new tracks, including a classy cover of the Police's *King of Pain*. She has a great bullshit detector when it comes to romance and spirituality—especially her own. Her first studio album, *Jagged Little Pill*, was about howling at the pain, while her follow-up was about healing. On *Unplugged*, her songs acquire a new dimension. *You Oughta Know* still seethes with anger, but here she sounds empowered as well. If the rush of lyrics on her sophomore album often overshadowed the songs, on *Unplugged* the music is finally allowed to breathe. The first single, *That I Would Be Good*, is the standout track—a near miracle. —VIC GARBARINI

In interviews, Perry Farrell usually comes off as incapable of linear thought. That can be annoying, but it's not necessarily detrimental in a singer. A retrospective of Farrell's best work with Jane's Addiction and Porno for Pyros, ***Rev*** (Warner Bros.) makes the old new again—not to mention the predictable unpredictable—with enhanced rhythm and bass tracks and some added psychedelia. Six of the 16 cuts are by Jane's Addiction, eight by Porno for Pyros and two are new. I would have preferred more Jane and less Porno, because Jane's Addiction was a great basic rock band with killer riffs worthy of Led Zeppelin. These riffs established a solid foundation for Farrell to launch his explorations.

EMILY FLAKE

Rage in *The Battle of Los Angeles*.

Rage rants, Alanis unplugs and Dolly delivers.

Porno for Pyros was more versatile but less powerful. A lot of Porno songs attempted a Beatlesesque psychedelia but amounted to aimless noodling. The title song on *Rev* revisits Jane's Addiction with some monster hard rock abetted by Rage Against the Machine guitarist Tom Morello. The other new song, a cover of Led Zeppelin's *Whole Lotta Love*, drops that song's signature riff and instead builds on its psychedelic break. Since Farrell has one of the great soprano moans in the history of rock—almost a match for Robert Plant's—his improvisations on a familiar melody over a whirlpool of electronic weirdness do a fine job of unhinging your brain. A new version of the classic *Been Caught Stealing* is pretty cool, too.

Master of dementia Primus checks in with ***Antipop*** (Interscope), a dissonant, though tightly arranged, plunge into white trash surrealism. Brilliant musicianship on songs about gasoline-huffing morons won't convert many Mariah Carey fans, but Primus doesn't want them anyway. —CHARLES M. YOUNG

R&B

Amel Larrieux made her recording debut as a member of the R&B combo Groove Theory, whose one album was standard radio-friendly fare. As a lead vocalist, Amel was no Mary J. Blige acolyte. That is further confirmed by her solo debut, ***Infinite Possibilities*** (550 Music). With instrumental backing that suggests early Seventies soul-jazz and British R&B, Larrieux sounds more relaxed and comfortable than we've heard her previously. Also, unlike the professional love lyrics of Groove Theory, these ten songs are personal and intimate. *Makes Me Whole*, with its solo piano backing and country-pop melody, has an engaging fragility and simplicity. *Sweet Misery* is highlighted by Amel's sexy, laid-back delivery. *I 'n' I*, a song about a black girl coming to terms with white standards of beauty, is a more confessional take on TLC's *Unpretty*. The most daring, and most successful, song on *Infinite Possibilities* is *Down*. Its eclectic backing supports a sultry, jazzy vocal by Amel that demonstrates more nuance than you would expect from an ex–R&B diva. Of the many female vocalists moving into Erykah Badu territory, Amel Larrieux is the most assured. She's working hard to become an artist. —NELSON GEORGE

COUNTRY

Dolly Parton has always been big-time. The lavish pop production on her records, as well as her television appearances, created an aw-shucks caricature far removed from her Appalachian roots. Dolly's new 13-song project, ***The Grass Is Blue*** (Sugar Hill), is her first bluegrass recording and includes traditional fare such as Lester Flatt's sassy *I'm Gonna Sleep With One Eye Open* and the Louvin Brothers' jazzy *Cash on the Barrelhead*. But the album's surprises are delivered through Parton's pure soprano on Billy Joel's *Travelin' Prayer* (with Alison Krauss on harmonies) and her tender, sparse take on Johnny Cash's *I Still Miss Someone*, flavored by Stuart Duncan's searching fiddle. —DAVE HOEKSTRA

RAP

Brooklyn rapper Mos Def was already a hero of New York's hip-hop underground when he joined Talib Kweli on the *Black Star* album in 1998. His solo ***Black on Both Sides*** (Rawkus) is a commercial for the articulate understatement favored by rappers who see hip-hop as subculture first and pop culture later. No hoochie choruses, no hooks vying for airtime, just flowing beats intertwined with simple melodies. Mos Def is one rapper who spills out philosophy as easily as someone discussing the ball scores at the watercooler—lots of words, some drama, but not much showing off, because he's too confident to need it. As the title indicates, he's a race man. He's smart and loving and convincing, and that's worth a listen. —ROBERT CHRISTGAU

fast tracks

QUEEN OF SOUL (FOOD) DEPARTMENT: The Food Network is considering an **Aretha Franklin** cooking show, and Aretha has plans to publish a cookbook. Move over, **Emeril.**

REELING AND ROCKING: The film bio of **Rubin "Hurricane" Carter** includes a hip-hop version of **Dylan's** 1976 song about the boxer. . . . **Will Smith** will star in a remake of the **Cary Grant–Audrey Hepburn** movie *Charade*. . . . We hear **Michael Jackson** will play **Edgar Allan Poe** in a thriller to be shot in Quebec at the end of the year. . . . **Alice Cooper** has joined the cast of *The Attic Expeditions*, a horror film with **Seth Green, Jeffrey Combs** and **Ted Raimi.**

NEWSBREAKS: Joni Mitchell's album of standards, *Both Sides Now*, should be in stores any day. . . . **Elton John** will receive a Grammy Legend Award this year. . . . **Warren G** has a gold record for *I Want It All*, named the unofficial theme song of the 1999 NFL season by *Sports Illustrated*. . . . **Eagle Eye Cherry's** sophomore CD will be in stores this spring. . . . *Is There Anybody Out There? The Wall Live* was due last year, but restoring and remixing old **Pink Floyd** tapes has taken longer than expected. . . . For charity: **Boy George** agreed to rerecord *Karma Chameleon* with the 100 winners of a British karaoke contest. . . . Make your way to Cleveland for the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum's new exhibit *Roots, Rhymes and Rage: The Hip-Hop Story*, which runs through August. Visitors will see **Tupac's** lyric manuscripts, **Missy Elliott's** Michelin Man costume, **Biggie's** red leather coat, the FBI's letter to Priority about **NWA,** and more. . . . The Hall's counterpart in England, the National Center for Popular Music in Sheffield, had money problems but has worked out a plan to stay open. . . . A San Francisco policeman is in trouble with the law for stealing merchandise to decorate his **Elvis** shrine. Now he's all shook up. . . . Look for an **Eric Clapton–B.B. King** CD collaboration some time this year. . . . The top-selling artists from the past century are no real surprise: the **Beatles** (best-selling group), the **Eagles** (best-selling album), **Garth Brooks** (best-selling male artist) and **Barbra Streisand** (female artist), and the single of the century is *Candle in the Wind 1997*. . . . **Babyface, Carole Bayer Sager** and **David Foster** have a new website up and running—Tonos.com. On it they share some of their secrets of musical success. . . . What does **Carlos Santana** have to say about his smash album *Supernatural*? "It's the most incidental I've ever felt on an album. You walk in like a chef, the water's boiling, the garlic's happening, the onions are in and you just cook." . . . After the **Backstreet Boys** finish touring, they'll return to the studio for a new album to be released in the fall. . . . Look for **Vanessa Williams'** Showtime special *That's Black Entertainment*, which will trace African Americans in film. . . . The 30th anniversary of the **Who's** *Live at Leeds* was observed mid-February with the release of *The Who: The BBC Sessions*, which spans the years between 1965 and 1973. . . . NBC will air a two-hour special in June, *Arista's 25 Years of Number One Hits*. . . . **Lit** plans to keep touring, but look for them on soundtracks and compilation CDs as well. . . . The last waltz of the last century: **Lou Bega** and **Sean Combs** performed at the Metropolitan Museum of Art's annual Costume Institute ball in New York City this past December. It's a little bit of mambo with a dash of Puffy. —BARBARA NELLIS

ROCK METER

	Christgau	Garbarini	George	Marsh	Young
Perry Farrell *Rev*	6	7	7	7	7
Amel Larrieux *Infinite Possibilities*	5	7	8	6	7
Alanis Morissette *MTV Unplugged*	7	10	7	8	7
Mos Def *Black on Both Sides*	8	7	8	9	8
Rage Against the Machine *The Battle of Los Angeles*	7	9	9	10	9

Los Angeles hip-hop has been defined by the likes of NWA, Dr. Dre and Death Row Records. But before that explosion of gats and gang culture, the label Delicious Vinyl had a giddy run of pop-rap hits. ***Waxing Off: The First Decade*** contains all the obvious rap hits—Tone-Loc's *Wild Thing* and *Funky Cold Medina*, Young MC's *Bust a Move*, the Pharcyde's *Passin' Me By*, Masta Ace Inc.'s *Born to Roll*. The label is also home to the UK jazz-funk group the Brand New Heavies, who are represented by three tracks. The label has slowed in recent years, but a new track by ex-Pharcyde Fatlip (*Goldmine*) suggests that there's still a place for Delicious Vinyl. —NELSON GEORGE

BLUES

I used to think that teen guitar phenomenon Jonny Lang was the best argument for reincarnation aside from the Dalai Lama himself. I was wrong. Shannon Curfman attended the same grammar school as Lang in Fargo, North Dakota. At the age of 11, she was inspired to start playing guitar by seeing her hometown hero in concert. She has just released ***Loud Guitars, Big Suspicions*** (Arista), the most impressive debut by a blues artist since Stevie Ray Vaughan's *Texas Flood*. Shannon sings with the brassiness of Bonnie Raitt, writes like a funked-up Sheryl Crow and plays guitar as if she's channeling both Stevie Ray and Jimi Hendrix. Here's the kicker: Shannon was 13 years old when she recorded these songs. She's 14 now. Everyone from Lang (who plays on three tracks) to Buddy Guy is singing Curfman's praises. Hope somebody sends a copy to the Dalai Lama. —VIC GARBARINI

POP

The Detroit-based writer-singer Stewart Francke had already released three albums of self-produced music (one song, *Kiss Kiss Bang Bang*, made it to the airwaves via *Melrose Place*) when he was diagnosed with leukemia. On his new CD, ***Swimming in Mercury*** (Blue Boundary), his music is dense and introspective. Francke uses his love of lush harmonies and elaborate arrangements to paint a portrait of a life lived between hope and despair. The most extraordinary track, *Letter From Ten Green*, contains lines originally written as a letter to his young children, to be read in the event of his death. *Keep Your Faith Darling*, a song about his relationship with his wife during this period, is also remarkable. And at the end, having survived, he writes *Radio Road*, perhaps his most beautiful melody. —DAVE MARSH

wired

SUITED FOR CYBERSEX

Vivid Interactive is about to release the ultimate sex toy—a skintight cybersuit with electronic sensors designed to get you off while online. The suit is made of neoprene, that lightweight and durable fabric used in surf threads. And yes, you can toss it in the wash. Sensors (positioned near the chest, inner thighs,

crotch and other erogenous zones) create a variety of sensations, from subtle heat to a feathery touch to a buzzing vibration. The version for men even has a one-size-fits-all "dick sleeve." You activate the sensors yourself via a PC connection and DVD software, but the real libido-booster is the technology's ability to be controlled by someone else over a computer network or the Internet. Picture this: While you are engaged in some hot chat with "RagingBabe," you're both wearing cybersuits and spinning the respective DVD-ROMs. On your computer screen is an image of one of Vivid's sexy adult stars along with a menu of sensations—feather, vibration, heat, scratch, etc. Click on "feather" and then on the model's left breast. Within moments, RagingBabe will feel the result—whether she's 1000 miles away or in the next room—and reciprocate. You hope. Lisa Comshaw, a model who has been testing the cybersuit for Vivid, says "the coolest thing is not knowing where the person on the other end is going to go. The anticipation is exciting. And, yes, it feels good, too." (FYI: Comshaw admits the cybersuit hasn't brought her to orgasm, but claims it's because she knows it's not her hubby clicking on the other end.) First-generation cybersuits should be available late this spring, priced at $170. (No word yet on a Mac version.) Down the road, the folks at Vivid envision a camera hookup so you can see, as well as hear and feel. One thing to remember: Size doesn't count in cyberspace, but bandwidth does. If you've been looking for an excuse to upgrade to that cable modem, now you have one. —BETH TOMKIW

DISNEY DOES HOME THEATER

Next time you're in Mickey Mouse country and need grown-up entertainment, swing by Epcot Center for the Ultimate Home Theater Experience. This 2700-square-foot exhibit, presented by Lutron, features some of today's slickest home electronics, including Philips' wall-mounted plasma television and a high-definition home video theater laid out like an elegant movie palace. Products by more than 20 manufacturers are assembled in three minicinemas. According to designer Theo Kalomirakis, any one of the displays could be modified to fit into a conventional basement or bedroom space. Kalomirakis is one of the guys behind the "ultimate" portion of the Epcot exhibit: two 15-seat art deco cinemas, complete with velour seats, digital LCD video projectors by Runco, discreetly hidden M&K Sound speakers and amplifiers by Audio Design Associates. The tab? More than $100,000. Interested? Visit ultimatehometheater.com. There, you'll find a virtual tour of the exhibit as well as a complete list of products on display. The site even directs you to stores in your zip code that sell the gear. —JONATHAN TAKIFF

GAME OF THE MONTH

We have seen the future of sports simulations—and it is **Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2000.** More than just an opportunity to hack on virtual courses, this PC game lets you log on to www.easports.com during actual PGA tournaments and play against the pros. It works like this: Roughly 90 seconds after a player takes a swing in, say, the U.S. Open, you'll see where the ball lands—within your game environment. You can then earn bragging rights by digitally outstroking Tiger, Mark O'Meara, Justin Leonard and other pros. Once you master the game's eight PGA courses, you can use the course architect to design your own links. —MARC SALTZMAN

WILD THINGS

The downside of having an extensive CD collection is that you can spend more time searching for music than listening to it. That's where the Power Tower comes in. This motorized 100-disc CD storage rack (pictured here) from the Sharper Image stands 3'4" tall. Press a button on the front of the unit ond the jewel cases fon forward or backward ot just the right height for eyeballing titles. Price: $170. • Guys who know their way around a musical instrument might find Suzuki's QChord to be a bit toylike. But if you're an Eddie Van Halen wannabe who's barely mastered the kazoo, you'll be an instant fan. The $200 device looks like a spoce-

age guitar (complete with a section for strumming) but plays like a keyboard, with 84 chords and more than 100 MIDI voice and rhythm samples. You can play along with demo songs—mistake free—by running your fingers across the guitar pad and experimenting with buttons. Wisely, Suzuki built a cartridge slot into the QChord. So when you tire of cheesy onboard tunes such as *You Light Up My Life*, you can pop in "Lennon and McCartney" and rock out to *A Hard Day's Night*, *We Can Work It Out* and six other Beatles tunes. Additional song cartridges cost $20 each. Check out qchord.com for a look and for details. —B.T.

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 159.

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By MARK FRAUENFELDER

MP3 GROWS UP

Unless you've been away, you know about MP3, an audio compression format that's become the number one way to distribute music over the Internet. The beauty of MP3 is that it reduces the file size of songs to a few megabytes, making it relatively painless to download them, even for those with slow modems. The record industry is freaking out over the MP3 phenomenon, going so far as to pressure university officials to conduct surprise computer searches and bust students who trade MP3s copied from CDs. Yes, there are mountains of pirated MP3 files available. But there are hundreds of thousands of legitimate MP3 songs out there, too. Most of them suck, but if you are willing to rifle through the virtual bins, you're bound to discover some excellent musicians. Start poking around at sites like **Rioport.com, Mjuice.com** or **MP3.com.** (Lately, I've been downloading spoken word files from **www.MP3Lit.com.**) Listen to the low-fi streaming samples (which start playing as soon as you click on them) and decide which ones are worth downloading. MP3.com recently added a feature that lets you quickly tag and "sideload" a bunch of songs at idrive.com, so you can download them to your hard drive as a batch when it's convenient (like before you leave your computer to go out at night). If you have a relatively new operating system, you probably already have the software needed to play MP3 files. If not, download the free Real Player G2 from **Real.com.** What about listening to MP3s when you're away from your desk? You have three choices: You can record them to cassette tape using the sound output jack on your computer, you can buy a CD-ROM burner for about $200 and make your own audio CDs or you can buy an MP3 player, like the tiny, lightweight Rio 500. The Rio comes with enough solid-state memory to store two hours of music, plus software that lets you make MP3 files from your own CDs.

BYE-BYE, BUSY SIGNAL

An Internet account costs about $20 a month. If you give a damn about missing phone calls while you're online, then you have to get a second line, which will add $20 to your bill. A cheaper solution comes with the stupid name of Pagoo (**pagoo.com**). For around $4 a month, you can subscribe to Pagoo's Call Catcher service, which will answer and record incoming messages without interrupting you. It sends you an instant on-screen notification of a message, giving you the option to play it back on your PC without having to disconnect. If you're a one-liner, try Pagoo. Your mother will love you for it.

LOST AND FOUND

Your memory might be worse than you think. Did you open a bank account as a kid, only to forget all about it when you moved to another state? Maybe you received a check in the mail years ago that you never cashed. Or maybe someone attempted to send you money but didn't use the correct address. If so, the funds could be sitting in a government-held account, waiting to be claimed. Florida alone has more than $500 million in unclaimed funds. It can't hurt to

STEVE TURK

visit **www.MissingMoney.com** to find out if any of it belongs to you. Enter your name, and the MissingMoney search engine will comb through its database of unclaimed property and bank account records. If you hit pay dirt (I didn't), the site will tell you how to file a claim.

On the other hand, if you've left a piece of luggage on a plane and didn't try to claim it within 90 days, you're out of luck. It's already been sold to a place like **www.Unclaimedbaggage.com.** The bags, along with the cameras, electronics, books and sports equipment in them, can be purchased at fire sale prices on this site. It's fun snooping through the contents. Among the curiosities: a Spanish-language edition of *CorelDraw 9* for $193 and a copy of *Tenth Complex Coronary Angioplasty Course Book* for $35.

THE BS DETECTOR

Anyone who has been online for more than a year has probably gotten e-mail about the guy who stuck his finger in a pay phone coin-return slot and got pricked by a needle. Attached to the needle was a note that read "Welcome to the world of AIDS." You've probably also received e-mail about the poor sap who took a hooker to a hotel and woke up in a bathtub full of ice. A note on the mirror, scrawled in lipstick, urged him to call 911. Turns out the guy's kidneys had been cut out and sold on the black market. Then there's the warning about the street gang that will hunt down and murder anyone who flashes his car headlights at them.

These stories, and others like them, share one feature—they're bullshit. The Net is a fertile breeding ground for urban legends, because people love to share a good story, especially one that involves everyday people getting caught up in bizarre situations. The next time somebody e-mails you a "true story" that seems too weird to be true, head over to **snopes.com,** a giant repository of Net hokum, to find out whether or not it's an urban legend. The Snopesters make it their job to investigate current rumors and report on their truthfulness. Most of the time, the rumors turn out to be false, but occasionally Snopes will uncover a grain of truth to a story.

PUSH BUTTON CHARITY

More than 24,000 people starve to death every year, most of them children. Would you like to give a couple of cups of rice to a hungry person just by clicking a button? At **thehungersite.com,** you can do just that. The site's sponsors donate money to the United Nations' World Food Program in exchange for small banner ads on the site. Since June 1999, the Hunger Site has provided more than 4 million meals to people throughout the world. Make it your first stop in your daily Web rounds.

QUICK HITS

When I have an early morning appointment, I get my wake-up call from Victoria's Secret model Laetitia Casta. You can too. Sign up at **yourday.com.** Get your choice of thousands of free e-mail newsletters at **fidget.com.** Let car dealers compete for your business at **openauto.com.** Take one of 15,000 different classes offered through **www.hungryminds.com.** Are you graduating soon? Go to **thepavement.com** to look for a job, find an apartment or buy a car.

You may contact Mark Frauenfelder by e-mail at livingonline@playboy.com.

movies

By LEONARD MALTIN

SELDOM HAS MOVIE iconography been put to such excellent use as in ***Diamonds*** (Miramax). Kirk Douglas is not playing himself here: His Harry Agensky is a fictional character—but he bears the marks of both the real and the reel Douglas. Film clips and stills from Douglas' celebrated 1949 film *Champion* show Agensky in his heyday as a prizefighter, while the speech pattern and experiences of the real-life octogenarian reveal the effects of a severe stroke. Only someone as gutsy as Kirk Douglas would still be willing—let alone able—to act in the face of his condition; only a part this tailor-made could do him justice. In *Diamonds* he's a feisty grandfather who goes off on an adventure with his estranged son (Dan Aykroyd) and loving grandson (Corbin Allred) in search of jewels a shifty promoter hid for him many years ago. Along the way the three wind up at a brothel run by Lauren Bacall (Douglas' co-star in 1950's *Young Man With a Horn*), where one of the young women (Jenny McCarthy) takes a liking to Michael, the teenager. Allan Aaron Katz' script is unabashedly sentimental but not mawkish, and John Asher's direction keeps everything on an even keel. *Diamonds* is best enjoyed by fans who have a regard for its star and share a movie history with him. He is positively inspiring to watch. ¥¥¥

•

A number of recent British films have dealt with that country's tumultuous melting pot and the resulting culture clashes. But Jasmin Dizdar's ***Beautiful People*** (Trimark), a prizewinner at last year's Cannes Film Festival, has a fresh point of view. Using humor and a keen observational eye, director Dizdar paints a gallery of seemingly disconnected portraits. His characters are neither heroes nor villains. They're just people trying to make their way in life: a harried obstetrician whose wife has walked out on him, a rigid school principal whose teenage son is a slacker, a rebellious cabinet minister's daughter who falls in love with a Bosnian immigrant. Out of this colorful, provocative stew the filmmaker finds something few of his peers have offered so far: a ray of hope. In a sly and surprising way, he weaves his stories together and comes to the conclusion that somehow people find a way to coexist in peace if not perfect harmony. ¥¥¥

Some *Beautiful People*.

A British sleeper,
a Hollywood legend,
a knockout performance.

•

I wish I liked ***The Hurricane*** (Universal) better; I certainly wanted to. There is no denying the power of Denzel Washington's performance as Rubin "Hurricane" Carter, the talented prizefighter who was railroaded into a lifelong prison sentence. It's a portrayal that puts extraordinary physical and emotional demands on the actor, and he comes through with flying colors. But I had trouble connecting with the subordinate characters—a trio of Canadian do-gooders played by Liev Schreiber, Deborah Kara Unger and John Hannah—who take up his cause. From the moment they take in an illiterate black boy from Brooklyn (well played by Vicellous Reon Shannon) there is a nagging question about who these people are and what they're all about. We never do find out, and that's the fatal flaw in *Hurricane*. (In fact, they turn out to be composites representing nine members of a commune.) The film is impeccably well made by veteran

PLAYING THE NUMBERS GAME

Who is the greatest comedy director of all time? Charlie Chaplin or Buster Keaton? Jerry Lewis? Billy Wilder, Leo McCarey or Howard Hawks? Perhaps Blake Edwards?

If you equate greatness with monetary success, the answer is Chris Columbus, whose movies (*Home Alone*, *Mrs. Doubtfire*, *Bicentennial Man*) have grossed more at the box office than those of any comedy director in history. That fact is frequently touted by the studios promoting his films.

And therein lies the problem. In today's Hollywood, money talks louder than anything else; in fact, it's the only thing some people want to hear.

At last year's Publicists Guild of America luncheon, actor Steve Gutenberg was introduced as a star whose films have made more than $1 billion. Now there's a sobering thought.

Hollywood loves playing the numbers game—it satisfies everyone's ego. But it bears little relation to the truth. Every year, *Variety* compiles its list of all-time box-office champions. The list is dominated by recent movies like *Titanic* and the decades-old *Star Wars*. But if the list were ever to be adjusted for inflation and other economic factors, it might not sit so well with today's movers and shakers. After all, *Gone With the Wind* and *The Wizard of Oz* came out when movie tickets sold for as little as ten cents apiece. Even tickets for *The Godfather* cost then about half what they do today.

Consider, too, that while contemporary movies make megabucks from repeat business (kids watching *Armageddon* over and over, God help us), it was commonplace until the Seventies for people to sit through a film several times without having to pay again. They were called "continuous showings" back then, and they've long since gone by the wayside.

While movie studios and producers love to boast of their box-office milestones, there's a question as to whether some modern hits will stand the test of time against beloved movies of the past. Is it really fair to say that *Con Air* is a bigger success than *Casablanca* or *The Graduate*? The numbers say it's so.

As for the Chris Columbus conundrum, one could make a case for an obscure comedy director of yore named Del Lord being the biggest moneymaker in history. He piloted many of the best *Three Stooges* two-reelers in the Thirties, when those shorts cost a paltry $35,000 apiece to make. They haven't stopped making money since then—and thanks to home video and a new berth on American Movie Classics, they're still yielding plentiful returns for Columbia Pictures.

To which we can only say: Nyuk, nyuk, nyuk! —L.M.

Steiger: Back in action.

OFF CAMERA

Ask **Rod Steiger** how he chooses a role, and he has a ready—and provocative—answer: "An actor doesn't select a part, the part selects him. You go to a cocktail party, this beautiful woman is standing there in this wonderful dress and you think, I want to take her home. She draws you in."

Lately, he's been attracted to some juicy parts—playing judges in both *Crazy in Alabama* and *The Hurricane* (for Norman Jewison, who helped steer him to an Academy Award for *In the Heat of the Night*), and a priest in *End of Days*. It's clear that the man whose credits range from *On the Waterfront* to *The Pawnbroker* to *Dr. Zhivago* has lost none of his fire on-screen.

But these major roles come after a long string of mostly grade-B projects that scarcely seemed worthy of his time.

"I had this clinical depression for almost a decade, and part of my way of coming back alive, so to speak, was to act in *anything*, to see if I could. I wasn't acting for you, I wasn't acting for the audience; I wanted to see if I could still move, still remember lines. There was no time to bullshit around; you wanted to pay the rent, you did it, you were glad you got it. But once you got it, the trick was to find a way to make it different."

Not surprisingly, one of Steiger's heroes, as a young man, was Paul Muni, an actor who wore his passion for acting on his sleeve. "An actor is supposed to explore life in front of an audience and create different people, and Paul could do it," says Steiger. "When I hear an actor say, 'I don't know; that's bad for my image,' I say, 'You poor son of a bitch, you've only got one image?'"

Steiger is still adding portraits to his rogue's gallery. And he adds, "I'm lucky. For a guy who's 74, I'm not playing grandfathers yet. So I have no complaints." —L.M.

director Norman Jewison, but the triumph of Carter's story is muted by the two-dimensional nature of the people who play such vital roles in his life. ¥¥½

•

An overheated story of three people who have been living with a sordid secret for most of their lives, ***Simpatico*** (Fine Line) never convinces us that their plight is as significant as it's played up to be. Director Matthew Warchus co-scripted this adaptation of a Sam Shepard play. Jeff Bridges plays a successful and seemingly ruthless wheeler-dealer based in Kentucky who's about to sell his champion horse, Simpatico. His wife is a distant, dissolute woman (Sharon Stone) who's devoted to the animal. Suddenly, the unhinged corner of their triangle (Nick Nolte) reenters their lives with a threatening phone call, and Bridges springs into action. Intermittent flashbacks recount their story and fill in the blanks, but can't explain why Bridges is affected so badly—and so quickly—by his overnight reacquaintance with Nolte. The one pleasure *Simpatico* affords us, and it's no small matter, is a chance to watch the great Albert Finney in a supporting role. His presence is so strong, and his command of the screen so effortless, that he easily walks away with the film. ¥¥

•

Titus (Fox Searchlight) is the first mainstream film by the innovative theater director Julie Taymor (best known for her hugely successful treatment of Disney's *The Lion King*) and it heralds the arrival of an exciting new voice in the world of cinema. Based on her 1995 stage adaptation of Shakespeare's tragedy *Titus Andronicus*, this eye-filling production boasts a cornucopia of striking and provocative ideas—and a gallery of great performances. Anthony Hopkins is Titus, the Roman general who returns home from battle a hero, with the Goth Queen, Tamora (Jessica Lange, tackling Shakespeare for the first time), his prisoner. His unquestioning dedication to protocol and duty leaves him unprepared for the drama that unfolds. Taymor sees this pageant of violence, betrayal and revenge as a cautionary tale for our time, and blends contemporary trappings with the historical setting. It's a heady brew, and while the carnage isn't always shown on-screen, its staging is so forceful and horrifying that you believe you've seen every bit of it. Strong performances by the two stars, plus Alan Cumming (as the treacherous Saturninus), Colm Feore, James Frain, Laura Fraser, Angus MacFadyen, Jonathan Rhys-Meyers and an extraordinary newcomer to film, Harry Lennix, who plays the duplicitous Aaron the Moor, make this lengthy descent into hell a compelling journey. ¥¥¥½

MOVIE SCORE CARD

capsule close-ups of current films
by leonard maltin

Angela's Ashes (Listed only) A respectable, well-made if curiously unmemorable rendering of Frank McCourt's memoir of an impoverished childhood in Ireland. ¥¥¥

Any Given Sunday (Listed only) Oliver Stone's headache-inducing treatise on football, peopled with dislikable, one-note characters. Al Pacino, Cameron Diaz, Dennis Quaid and Jamie Foxx star. ¥

Beautiful People (See review) A perceptive and heartening mosaic of culture clashes in England that may be the year's first real sleeper. ¥¥¥

The Cider House Rules (Reviewed 2/00) A wonderful movie, adapted by John Irving from his sprawling book about the head of an orphanage whose adoptive son decides to see the world for himself. Michael Caine, Tobey Maguire and Charlize Theron star. ¥¥¥¥

Diamonds (See review) Kirk Douglas is inspiring to watch; he gives a terrific performance in this unabashedly sentimental film. ¥¥¥

Fantasia 2000 (Listed only) This update of Walt Disney's boldest experiment of marrying music to animation can't match the original but still has much to offer. ¥¥¥

The Hurricane (See review) Denzel Washington's powerful performance makes this a must-see, even if the telling of Rubin "Hurricane" Carter's story is flawed. ¥¥½

Man on the Moon (2/00) Jim Carrey deftly channels Andy Kaufman, but the film fails to convince us that his life is worth reliving on-screen. ¥¥

Simpatico (See review) An overheated adaptation of Sam Shepard's play about three friends who share a sordid secret. Jeff Bridges, Sharon Stone and Nick Nolte star—but it's Albert Finney in a supporting role who walks away with it ¥¥

The Talented Mr. Ripley (Listed only) Two thirds of a terrific film, with Matt Damon as the cipher-like hero of Patricia Highsmith's provocative novel about a young man who wants to be what he is not. Gwyneth Paltrow, Cate Blanchett and an impressive Jude Law also star. ¥¥½

Titus (See review) Anthony Hopkins and Jessica Lange head a superlative ensemble in Julie Taymor's innovative spin on William Shakespeare's surprisingly contemporary tragedy *Titus Andronicus*. ¥¥¥½

¥¥¥¥ Don't miss ¥¥ Worth a look
¥¥¥ Good show ¥ Forget it

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GUEST SHOT

"I love *Dr. Stangelove*," says **Wendie Malick** of NBC's *Just Shoot Me*. "It always surprises me, and I watch for the moments when the supporting characters burst into hysterics. You can see them start to break. If you watch carefully, you can see them lose it during Peter Sellers' takes, because he is so brilliant. I like the animated Disney version of *Peter Pan*, because I'm named after Wendy Darling, except for some reason they decided to spell my name with an 'ie.' And *Ryan's Daughter*. I love those epic Irish movies. I just love David Lean's other movies—*Lawrence of Arabia*, *Bridge on the River Kwai*, *Dr. Zhivago*." —SUSAN KARLIN

DISC ALERT

It seems unjust that *Natural Born Killers* didn't win an Oscar for its unnerving editing. Judge for yourself on the new ***Natural Born Killers: The Director's Cut*** (Trimark, $30), which arrives not only with commentary from director Oliver Stone but nearly an hour of additional footage as well, including trimmed scenes and what Trimark bills as "an explosive alternate ending." As we recall it, the original ending wasn't exactly low-impact.

—GREGORY P. FAGAN

SPAGHETTI WESTERNS

They call them spaghetti Westerns because they're produced by cowboy-loving Italians, are stocked with American stars and have plenty of marinara issuing from gunshot wounds. We take aim at a few favorites, with their titles in the original Italian.

Per un pugno di dollari (1964): The one that started it all and made man-of-few-words Clint Eastwood a shooting star. Director Sergio Leone's tight close-ups and revenge-inspired shoot-ups make *Fistful of Dollars* one of the best.

Django (1966): Riding close on *Fistful*'s spurred heels was this, starring Franco Nero as a Gatling gun–toting wanderer. Atmospheric and authentic, with a furious ending that keeps you awake. We'd swear Clint does the voice dub for look-alike Nero. New DVD includes a clever shooting game, if you're in the mood.

C'era una volta il west (1969): Charles Bronson and Jason Robards try to protect Claudia Cardinale from ruthless villain Henry Fonda (yes, Fonda, and he's truly evil) in Leone's masterwork, *Once Upon a Time in the West*. Can't miss with a story by all three—Sergio Leone, horror master Dario Argento and the great Bernardo Bertolucci.

Il mio nome è nessuno (1973): Fonda must have liked Europe, because he's at it again in *My Name Is Nobody*. This time he's an aging gunfighter trying to retire, but hero-worshipping, hotshot gunslinger Terence Hill won't let him. Funny, with a twist at the end.

Lo chiamavano Trinità (1971): Hill made a career in the genre. *They Call Me Trinity* is lightweight and spoofy but has a following nonetheless. Trivia: Blue-eyed blond Hill's real name is Mario Girotti.

Amore, piombo e furore (1978): Known in the U.S. as *China 9, Liberty 37* (a.k.a. *Gunfire*), this one involves railroad barons, a randy widow and double-crossing hired guns. Sam Peckinpah debuts as one of the wild bunch.

Giù la testa (1972): Irish bomber James Coburn and bandit Rod Steiger want to rob a bank but wind up in the middle of the Mexican Revolution in *Duck, You Sucker* (a.k.a. *A Fistful of Dynamite*).

J. and S.: storia criminale del far west (1972): But you can call it Sonny and Jed. Tomas Milian as Jed and creamy Susan George as Sonny are the Bonnie and Clyde of the Wild West. Telly Savalas is the demented lawman who won't let a little thing like being blind stop him from bringing them back dead or alive.

Faccia a faccia (1967): A gentle history professor comes "face to face" with evil, and instead of being a do-gooder, becomes a ruthless outlaw leader. Directed by spaghetti-meister Sergio Sollima, who gives plenty to chew on in this violent morality play.

Il ritorno di Clint il solitario (1972): If you can't get Eastwood to star in your Western, put his name in the title: *The Return of the Lone Clint*. —BUZZ MCCLAIN

GUILTY PLEASURE OF THE MONTH

And boy, do we feel guilty for actually enjoying this politically incorrect shocker from 1974, out in April on DVD (Anchor Bay Entertainment): ***Ilsa, She-Wolf of the S.S.*** Merciless Ilsa, assayed with whip-cracking swagger by statuesque Dyanne Thorne, runs a Nazi "medical camp" where the daily routine includes torture and sex, and torturous sex. But wait—Ilsa is attempting to prove that women can take more pain than men, so it's a feminist statement, right? Now we feel a little better. Two sequels, ***Ilsa: Harem Keeper of the Oil Sheiks*** and ***Ilsa: The Wicked Warden,*** are also available. —BUZZ MCCLAIN

video mood meter

MOOD	MOVIE
MUST-SEE	***American Beauty*** (downtrodden suburban dad Spacey rediscovers his cool in midlife crisis; great images, better script), ***The 13th Warrior*** (Arab poet [Antonio Banderas] joins Norsemen on a medieval crusade against a flesh-eating enemy).
COMEDY	***Bowfinger*** (scheming Steve Martin makes a star vehicle sans star; Eddie Murphy at his dual-role best), ***Outside Providence*** (coming-of-age in the Seventies via *Dumb and Dumber*'s Farrelly brothers; low-key, with a few howls).
THRILLER	***The Minus Man*** (Janeane Garofalo cottons to bland, blond post office co-worker Owen Wilson, a serial killer; stealth chills), ***Stir of Echoes*** (a little hypnosis and *bam*—Kevin Bacon sees what haunts his kid; a more facile *Sixth Sense*).
GANGSTAS AND GANGSTERS	***In Too Deep*** (Omar Epps goes undercover to bust LL Cool J's coke ring; cast overcomes hip-hop *Donnie Brasco* clichés), ***Mickey Blue Eyes*** (Hugh Grant marries into Mob don James Caan's family; better as small-screen fare).
SLEEPER	***The Source*** (all that's cool came from the Beats; director Chuck Workman's slick documentary makes a case), ***B. Monkey*** (a tepid romance—London drip Jared Harris takes up with boho bad girl—but Asia Argento is a definite find).

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books

STRANGE SEX

What would you do if you were suddenly a woman? ***Chick for a Day*** (Simon & Schuster) is an anthology of short fiction, poems and essays written by 38 male authors who address that question. Most of the responses (including a curious story in which a vagina is grafted onto John Wayne's head, enabling him to have sex in a groundbreaking way) are lighthearted and humorous. But give men a new toy and they become obsessed with it: As you would expect, the first item of business in these pieces is masturbation. Other activities considered are lesbian sex, peeing, shaving pubic hair, getting harassed, giving birth, acting moody and seducing Bill Clinton. The passages describing female orgasms are particularly brilliant—and erotic. ***Real Sex*** (Plume), by John Kohut and Roland Sweet, is a compilation of weird-but-true news items—peculiar fetishes, the stupid places men stick their dicks, bizarre laws governing sexual acts and other wacky sex stories. One of the more memorable: The British Vegetarian Society launched an advertising campaign urging people to stop giving cucumbers preferential treatment as a sex toy and to instead masturbate with neglected fruits and vegetables such as melons and asparagus.

—PATTY LAMBERTI

MADNESS AT THE MOVIES

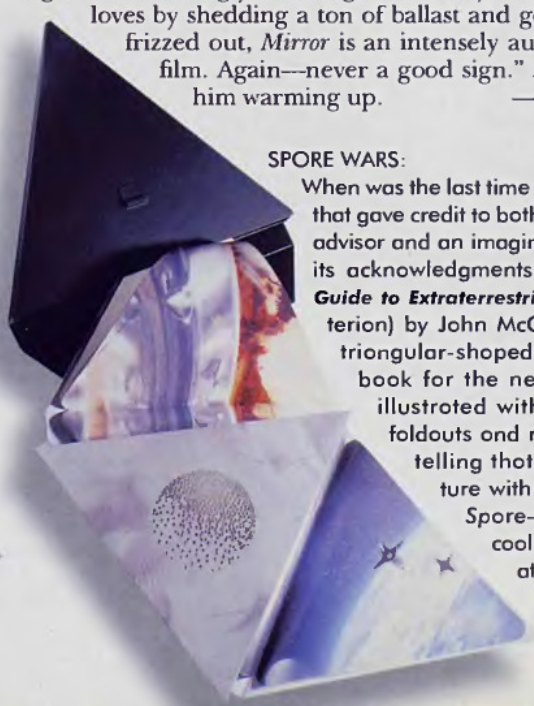
Anyone who thinks he's an expert on cult movies is delusional, unless he's read Eric Schaefer's remarkable volume ***Bold! Daring! Shocking! True! A History of Exploitation Films 1919–1959*** (Duke University). As the title indicates, Schaefer doesn't address the low-budget-genre movies of the Sixties and Seventies usually identified with the exploitation tag, such as those created by Russ Meyer. Instead, his focus is on forbidden topics—sex, drugs, vice and nudism—from movies such as *The Naked Truth*, *Road to Ruin*, *The Wages of Sin*, *Reefer Madness* and *The Flesh Merchants*. Schaefer traces the origin of this genre to the sex hygiene movies produced after World War I to educate soldiers about venereal diseases. Using a wide range of sources—newspapers, personal interviews and archives—the book is more than a study of the underside of the film industry. Written in a scholarly tone and researched with astonishing thoroughness, Schaefer's book says, "the films reveled in the exotic but were exceptionally provincial." It's an insightful social history that examines the evolution of American attitudes about censorship. But there is no censoring Joe Queenan. A new collection of essays, ***Confessions of a Cineplex Heckler: Celluloid Tirades and Escapades*** (Hyperion), shows why Queenan stands out among contemporary film critics. His act, an irreverent concoction of sardonic rant and shrewd prank, is worth following. In "Matinee Idle," he hands out refunds to patrons who suffered through *Gone Fishin'* with Joe Pesci and Danny Glover. Did we mention he doesn't mince words? "Barbara Streisand's new film, *The Mirror Has Two Faces*, is a romantic comedy that was directed, produced, partially written and scored by the star herself. As such, it is the scariest thing since the Ebola virus. Based on a French movie—never a good sign—about an ugly duckling who finally wins the man she loves by shedding a ton of ballast and getting her hair frizzed out, *Mirror* is an intensely autobiographical film. Again—never a good sign." And that's just him warming up.

—PAUL ENGLEMAN

MAGNIFICENT OBSESSIONS

For men, it's simple: boxers or briefs. For women, underwear is fabulously complex, beginning with turn-of-the-century pantaloons and up to and including today's second-skin bras and panties. Fashion historian Farid Chenoune is in on Victoria's secret, and he dedicates his 200-page tome, ***Beneath It All: A Century of French Lingerie*** (Rizzoli), to the notion that as women have evolved, so has lingerie. Chenoune reminds us that the girls of the 1800s embroidered red thread in their undies as a pubescent rite of passage. He marvels that corsets were said to cause miscarriages and inspire vertigo. He salutes the bra-burning Seventies rebels and the thong-sporting Eighties sexpots. Chenoune's eloquent prose is juxtaposed with knockout photos of women—including Madonna and Sophia Loren—who wear anything well. The shot of Brigitte Bardot (bottom left) was taken during the 1961 filming of *A Very Private Affair*. We're delighted lingerie has gone public.

—ALISON LUNDGREN



SPORE WARS:

When was the last time you read a book that gave credit to both a metaphysical advisor and an imagination mentor in its acknowledgments? ***Spore: A Star Guide to Extraterrestrial Worlds*** (Penterion) by John McCoy does. It's a triangular-shaped science fiction book for the new millennium, illustrated with origami-style foldouts and nonlinear storytelling that blends adventure with mythology. Buy Spore—along with its cool carrying case—at www.spore.net.

—HELEN FRANGOULIS

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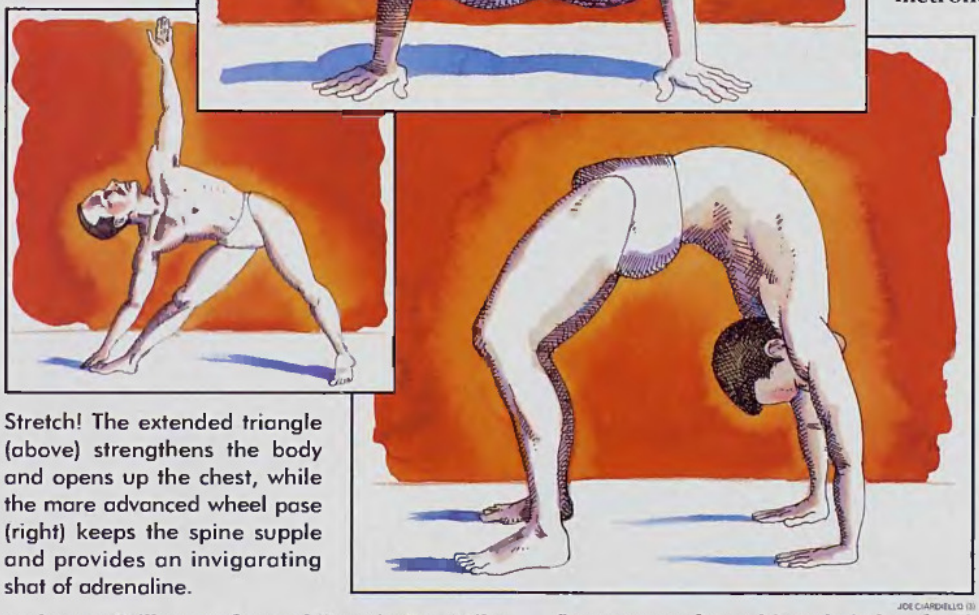
By JOE DOLCE

EXTREME YOGA

I'M IN A ROOM so hot and humid the windows are sweating; I'm balancing on my right leg, struggling to extend the other leg and grab my foot. It's not happening and I buckle like a marionette. I glance at the clock. "Keep your gaze on the tip of your nose," the instructor calls out calmly, sweetly, aiming her admonition my way. Suddenly she's in front of me, hoisting my extended leg onto her shoulder. Every limb of my body shakes as she lifts it higher and higher. I'm 60 minutes into a 90-minute class of Ashtanga yoga, and even though I'm perspiring all over the instructor's shirt—and the workout is torture—I'm hooked.

Ashtanga is to yoga what Nascar is to driving—amped up, strenuous, designed for overachievers who want to calm up. Composed of a chain of poses (asanas) that build strength, endurance, flexibility and mental acuity, Ashtanga is considered by practitioners to be a rigorous, whole-body approach to fitness. To outsiders, it's madness. In fact, the best understanding of why anyone would take up Ashtanga comes via a programmer pal of mine, Mark, who recently hooked up with a dominatrix. Mark extols the "spiritual" relationship he's building with his mistress, waxing rapturously on recent floggings and whippings. Although our means vary, Mark and I have more in common than I care to admit: We are both true millennial masochists, on different roads to the same transcendence. Except that my dominatrix wears a leotard and does her thing at Jivamukti Yoga Center—ground zero for all yogis in New York City. While signing up (30 classes for $300), I spotted actor Willem Dafoe and Beastie Boy Mike D, both sweaty, glowing and clutching their rolled sticky mats as they walked out. I knew this was the place to be.

Great at parties! The floating lotus (below) takes serious arm strength, but it is a balance pose that also taxes the abs.



Stretch! The extended triangle (above) strengthens the body and opens up the chest, while the more advanced wheel pose (right) keeps the spine supple and provides an invigorating shot of adrenaline.

JOE CARDILLO (3)

YOGA HISTORY 101

The practice of yoga (which means "union with God") originated over 4000 years ago. Since then, many branches have sprung up, depending on their teachers' proclivities. Ashtanga has been promulgated by K. Pattabhi Jois, a rotund, octogenarian living master who still teaches in Mysore, India. Although it's possible to find Ashtanga in its pure form in several major cities, many Western teachers have softened its edges and repackaged it as the more palatable (i.e., less painful) Power Yoga.

THE THEORY

Most exercise is either isometric (lifting or pushing against a heavy object, such as a weight), which builds strength; or aerobic (e.g., running, spinning or swimming), which gets the heart thumping. Ashtanga combines the two for a complete workout. While pushing plates builds bulk, Ashtanga lengthens muscles—you stretch them while you strengthen them—and the difference between the two methods is clear the day after: Yoga leaves you plenty sore, but not stiff. And the strength you're building is of a different nature. Instead of bulking, your muscles become toned. Overall, the physical results are similar to those achieved by swimming, hurdling or basketball, according to David Life, co-founder and spokesyogi of Jivamukti, except that basketball doesn't have a mystical tradition behind it.

Most important, Ashtanga emphasizes proper breathing. Air, channeled through the nose and via a constricted throat into the lungs, produces a rhythmic, bellows-like sound. (Diehards refer to it as Darth Vader breathing.) With practice, it becomes the mind's metronome, relaxing, steadying and ultimately motivating every muscle movement. This controlled breathing also serves to quiet the mind and strengthen concentration, making the practice an active meditation. True well-being, after all, doesn't come from sweat alone.

THE PRACTICE

There are six levels of Ashtanga—advanced yogis can often be spotted in sideshow positions (balancing on their forearms and touching their heads with their feet, for example), but even the most advanced devotees reach only level four—in this lifetime at least. I doubt I'll ever get past level two.

In my early dabblings with Ashtanga, I felt clunky and rigid compared with my more limber classmates, who soared through the air and pretzeled their bodies into remarkable contortions. But the instructions *(concluded on page 143)*

By ASA BABER

ALPHA BETA DELTA ZETA

SEVERAL OF today's presidential candidates have been paying me a nonnegotiable consulting fee of $60,000 a month to advise them on their status as men. Because I am recognized worldwide as the ultimate authority on manhood, each candidate has chosen me to assess his MQ (masculinity quotient) and determine how it can be beefed up for the American public.

I appreciate the soft currency these gentlemen are throwing at me, and it is difficult to walk away from $300,000 a month (at last count). But there is something dishonest in taking so much laundered cash when I can summarize my thoughts in a single page. What follows is everything you need to know about manhood if you are a male running for president today.

Asa Baber's Election Directions:

There are only four kinds of men in politics, and they are:

(1) The Alpha Male: Rugged, honest, blunt, modest, religious, athletic, able to leap tall lobbyists in a single bound, sired by ambitious parents who never permitted him to cut school or deal drugs, team captain of every sport he played in high school and college, emotionally sturdy and physically hardy, a dog-lover and cat-mistruster, unencumbered by self-doubt, dressed in either lumberjack casual or Polo spectacular, happily married (but still attractive to women), a Medal of Honor winner who came home from combat an untarnished hero, the father of ten children (one of whom has a crippling disease), successful in business, the only candidate who publishes the home phone numbers and addresses of all financial contributors (along with a summary of why they contribute and what they want from him). The alpha male is an ideal role model.

Unfortunately, no man fits this description (though some have died trying). With a few modifications, John McCain might come close to alpha ranking, but it has been revealed that he sometimes has a fierce temper, and that is so alpha it hurts him.

(2) The Beta Male: Just call him Hamlet-on-the-Potomac. This poor putz doesn't know who he is or what image he is supposed to project. You heard that right. He is actually trying to create himself in front of us, like a hologram. Although raised in high privilege, he says he was born in poverty ("The red clay from the river bottom stained his feet when he was a boy," says the narrator of his promotional film, *The Man From Somewhere, Sort of, Maybe*). But his six country-club memberships and his $20 million stock portfolio (all held in secret trust) belie that claim.

With a spine stuck in neutral and a goody-two-shoes attitude that makes our teeth hurt, our typical beta male is actually a beta blip, confused about everything but wonk talk. (Beta blips love policy debates: "If you take the two percent option from the one percent inboard allowance added to the accelerated write-off clause in the Single Parents' Safe Dry Cleaning Act of 1994. . . .")

Finally, the beta blip avoids singing aloud in public (he knows the lyrics to every Broadway musical ever written) because his advisors fear he might be labeled as gay if that information ever makes the tabloids.

P.S. I am not talking about Al Gore here, so get off my case.

(3) The Delta Male: Speaking of men who could be gay and don't know it, our delta male throws as much chaff in the wind as he can to keep us off balance as we try to assess him.

Tightly wound but always attempting to appear loose as a goose, surrounded mostly by male advisors who have been his friends for years, the delta male swings both ways, if you know what I mean. He can be as sensitive as a shy girl at her First Communion one day, and as crude as a long-haul trucker in a massage parlor the next. Like the beta male, he is secretly unsure of his identity, but he tries to project every emotion in the rainbow of human experience.

He wears clothes well, but not too well. He can hug a supporter, but not too often. He cried once, when a free weight fell on his toes. He served in the military, as a supply officer at a golf course in Hawaii. He admits that he led a dissolute life when he was in his 20s, but no photos of him dancing naked in a conga line on Fire Island are extant. What you see is what you get with delta man: mixed signals and a schizoid foreign policy.

Anyone who thinks I'm describing the man called W is certifiably nuts.

(4) The Zeta Male: Can you make that *Twilight Zone* woo-woo sound and wave your finger around like a copter crew chief signaling liftoff? Do it now as an appropriate intro to this gentleman.

The zeta male is not of this earth. He is an alien in human form and has been known to visit galaxies from long ago and far away while still seated by the podium at a fund-raiser in Washington, D.C. That's right, the zeta male can be in two places at once and is often mentally removed from our universe. When the truth comes out, it will be determined that he is from a galaxy called XYZ-9, which happens to be 600 million light years away and is rumored to entrap the souls of all atheists on earth who secretly want to go to heaven when they die.

Some people say the zeta male is 2000 years old, a composite personality made up of men from the past, including zealots, gladiators, spice traders, flying saucer navigators, Scottish sheepherders and a man called Horse.

The most unpredictable of all the candidates, he has been known to trip out in the middle of a speech, standing there like a frozen yogurt statue while his handlers pray that their man will come back to them and start talking about school vouchers again.

If you think I am describing the guy we call Dollar Bill, forget it. There is no resemblance between zeta man and the professor that I can see.

One more thing about election 2000: With it, we bid adieu (temporarily, at least) to the slickest male politician of the 20th century, the legendary William Jefferson Clinton, the only alpha/beta/delta/zeta male in captivity. Whatever contempt you might have for him because of his personal conduct, and however infuriating you might have found his slipperiness, this man manipulated reality like a prince and could appear as all things to all people when his survival was at stake. He had the hide of a rhinoceros, the guts of a linebacker, the brazenness of a gigolo and the endurance of a marathon runner.

Sayonara, Bubba. It was not always fun watching you operate, but it was an education in deviousness that Don Corleone would have enjoyed. When will you be back in our lives, morphing like a chameleon through the four phases of manhood? I can't wait.

★ AT SOME POINT ★

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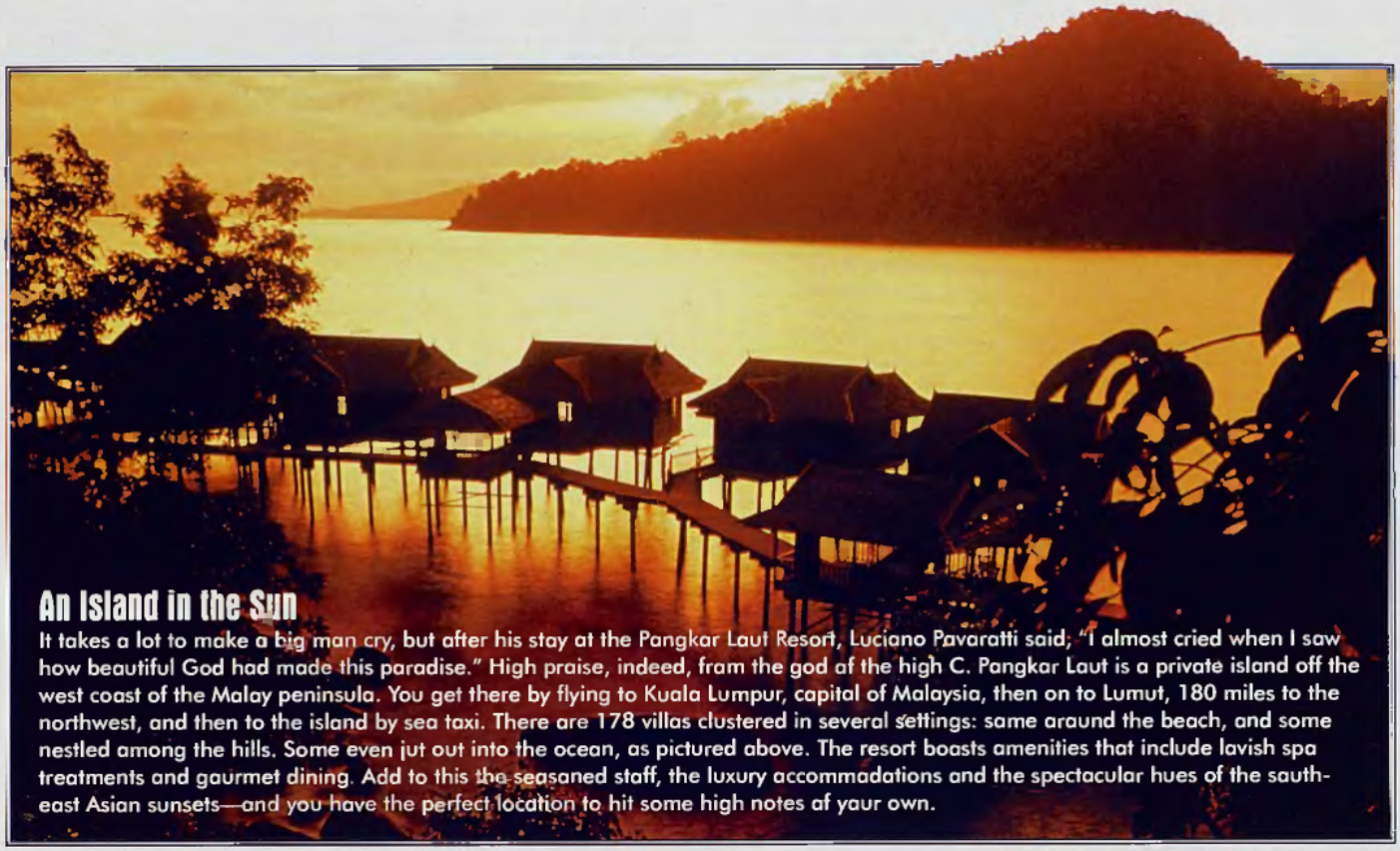
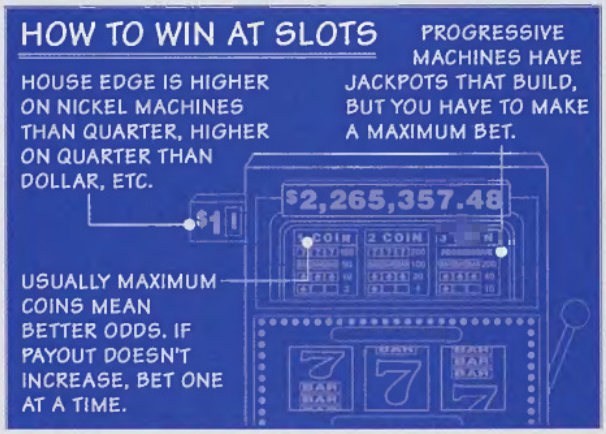


An Island in the Sun

It takes a lot to make a big man cry, but after his stay at the Pangkar Laut Resort, Luciano Pavaratti said, "I almost cried when I saw how beautiful God had made this paradise." High praise, indeed, from the god of the high C. Pangkar Laut is a private island off the west coast of the Malay peninsula. You get there by flying to Kuala Lumpur, capital of Malaysia, then on to Lumut, 180 miles to the northwest, and then to the island by sea taxi. There are 178 villas clustered in several settings: same around the beach, and some nestled among the hills. Some even jut out into the ocean, as pictured above. The resort boasts amenities that include lavish spa treatments and gaurmet dining. Add to this the seasaned staff, the luxury accommadations and the spectacular hues of the sauth-east Asian sunsets—and you have the perfect location to hit some high notes af yaur own.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Slot Smarts

No casino game offers so much for so little as slots. To increase your chances: (1) Join the slot club. It's free and you get a rebate of up to one percent on bets, plus complimentary or discounted meals and rooms. (2) Play in casinos. Avoid airports, restaurants or supermarkets, where odds are worse. In Nevada, slots can pay back as little as 75 percent, but most casinos offer more than 90 percent as an inducement. (3) The higher the jackpot the worse the odds: Machines with lower jackpots pay out smaller wins more frequently, so if you're not going for the big payday, play these. (4) On all progressive and most other slots, play the maximum number of coins. If your budget is tight, choose a cheaper slot. (5) Play the highest-denomination machine you can. The house edge decreases as the price rises.

The Perfect Leg of Lamb

Like a rib roast of beef, a roasted leg of lamb is a welcome and festive meal. And it's surprisingly easy to make. Bring a five- to eight-pound leg of lamb, with the bone, to room temperature. Prepare the following roasting sauce: Mix a clove or two of chopped garlic, a teaspoon each of salt and fresh ground black pepper, a crushed bay leaf, a teaspoon each of powdered ginger, thyme, sage and marjoram, and two tablespoons each of soy sauce and olive oil. Trim excess fat off the lamb and pierce the meat with a fork in several places evenly over its surface. Spread the sauce over the lamb, place the lamb on a rack in a roasting pan and heat for 20 minutes in an oven preheated to 425°. Reduce the heat to 325° and roast until the internal temperature is 135° to 140° (for medium). Let the roast rest on a cutting board for about 20 minutes—the temperature will continue to rise during some of that time—before slicing.

MANTRACK

Nuts to You

Mix yourself a pisatini or a pisapolitan and see if Pisa, a new nut liqueur from Italy, doesn't add a different slant to your favorite cocktails. Of course, the first thing you notice is the amusing bottle—it captures the spirit of the Leaning Tower, completed in 1350. (A porous foundation caused the tower to tilt.) But Pisa's blend of different nuts imparts a subtlety to the drink that almond or hazelnut liqueurs don't have. At 48 proof, it's potent enough to be enjoyed on the rocks. But we prefer Pisa straight up in a liqueur glass, after dinner, accompanied by a small cigar, or as a splash in coffee. Price: about $22 for a 750 ml bottle nationwide.

Clothesline: Ben Stein

The star of Comedy Central's *Win Ben Stein's Maney* and his own talk show says he's partial to "a dark blue suit with a light shirt and tie." A blue blazer, gray pants and a tie or an outfit like he's pictured in here are acceptable alternatives. Stein prefers shoes by Simple because "they're unbelievably comfortable" and his ties are all from one source, Hermes. "They're the cheapest thing they sell." Britches, a store in Washington, D.C., and Brooks Brothers are where Stein buys his suits. He also prefers BB for shirts, belts, underwear and socks. ("I'd be hysterically upset if they went out of business," he says.) For casual attire, Stein's choices are Lacoste pullovers and Bermuda shorts. Why Lacoste? "They make a fine product."

DKNY/NY

The town so hip they named it twice is celebrating a three-peat with the opening of DKNY, a 17,000-square-foot store at 655 Madison (at East 60th Street) that is impressive even for Manhattan. Designed by Donna Karan International's creative team in conjunction with the New York firm Janson Goldstein, DKNY is an airy, three-story amalgam of mirrored walls and stainless steel that's similar, says a store spokesman, "to a downtown loft or an unadorned stage set." Nice loft, Donna. Movable partitions allow departments to change shape as needed. On the lower level, for example, men's clothing isn't far from Ducati motorcycles. The main floor is where you can find Apple computers and CD listening stations as well as the DKNY Lifestyle department, which offers a mixture of gizmos and gadgets. Up top is the Floor for Women, which includes a nosh pit, Blanche's Organic Café. Furniture showcased throughout the store is also for sale, so check for price tags.

Guys Are Talking About . . .

Wallet knives. Spyderco's SpyderCard (pictured left and below) weighs only 3.3 ounces and is about the same size as a credit card, yet its stainless steel blade and one-hand accessibility make it as useful and tough as a pocket knife. Price: $39.95 in half-serrated (shown) or plain-edged styles. • *Vacation homes via the web.* Interhome, one of the largest vacation rental agencies in Europe, has launched interhome.com as a way to simplify bookings. On the site, prospective renters can choose from about 20,000 homes, villas, chalets and apartments in Europe (and Florida), book online and receive confirmation and invoice back by e-mail. • *Shower heads she'll love.* Waterpik's new Misting Massage model offers seven settings from a stimulating Morning Surf Massage to a soothing Evening Tide spray. Price: About $55. A five-spray head is also available for $47. • *Brooks Brothers' two-button cuffs.* We visited that bastion of taste and sartorial conviction not long ago and discovered, to our distress, that it had introduced multilength sleeve measurements (i.e., 16"x32"–33") with two cuff buttons into its line of both dress and casual shirts. "Oh, we'd never stop offering single-measurement sleeves" a salesman said nervously as we eyed piles of handsome shirts that we now wouldn't buy. "It's an experiment, maybe to keep inventory down or something. Do tell management your feelings." BB management: We like your dress and casual shirts with single-measurement sleeve lengths and only one button on each cuff. You've been told.

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 159.

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The Playboy Advisor

I have read *The Playboy Advisor* for years and cannot think of anyone better to answer my question. I'm dating someone and we appear to be getting closer to having a sexual relationship. The problem is that I'm still a virgin at age 30. Because I grew up in a religious household, I was taught that premarital sex is taboo. Over the years, I've come to the opinion that it's acceptable but not to be taken lightly. Dating has never been difficult for me, but none of my previous interactions with women progressed to where my virginity became an issue. I am comfortable with who I am and with my decisions but fear she might think I'm strange. Should I tell her about my lack of experience?—M.G., Cleveland, Ohio

Of course you should tell her. If she buys it, you're in for the night of your life. She may be, too. Being deflowered is one of our favorite fantasies. Singer Enrique Iglesias says he's claimed to be a virgin as a pickup line, and that it works. "I think girls find it sweet." We received several letters this month from aging virgins. Read on for another.

I'm 25 and have never had a girlfriend or kissed a woman. I had my first date a year ago and have seen a few more women since, but nothing's been serious. I'm happy with my life but frustrated with my virginity. I've justified it by telling myself I'm waiting for a committed relationship. But now I'd like to put it behind me, so I've decided to contact an escort. I would hire her a few times to have sex, then call it quits. What do you think?—D.H., Memphis, Tennessee

If your lack of experience bothers you that much, go for it. Play it safe and wear a condom. Also, be discreet, for prostitution is legal only in some counties in Nevada. We hope you aren't disappointed; sex is generally more satisfying with a woman who isn't caressing your wallet. Since you'll no longer be a virgin after the first encounter, those extra sessions won't be necessary, right?

My wife is divorcing me. We have two kids. What should I do?—T.R., Denver, Colorado

Do you want a divorce? If not, make an attempt at reconciliation. Counseling may repair the relationship, or at least make the split easier to understand. If that's not in the cards, consider mediation, which can be less expensive and stressful than a court battle. If your wife is vengeful, brace yourself for a long and costly fight. The law usually favors the mother, which translates for many men into Kafkaesque situations in which they never know what to expect next. In his book From Courtship to Courtroom: What Divorce Law Is Doing to Marriage, Jed Abraham, an attorney who specializes in family law, describes what can happen to your possessions, to your role as a father and to your finances. Although every jurisdiction has its own twists, the wife gets effective custody of the kids in four of five cases, along with support payments. You also may have to pay alimony and some of her legal bills. Even before you hire a lawyer, make copies of all your financial records. If you move out or are evicted by the court, you may not have access to them later. Do everything you can to preserve your relationship with your children, since your time with them may be limited. To find a reputable lawyer, poll friends who have been divorced. You can find more guidance at aaml.org, the online site of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers.

It's great that D.G., who reported to the Advisor in November that he can produce ample ejaculate even at the age of 69, is still going strong. But he gives new meaning to the term spooning. Who the hell measures their semen, and in tablespoons, no less? If I ever visit, remind me to take my own silverware.—B.C., Rusk, Texas

Or your own coffee cup. Depends on the guy.

About a year ago, the Advisor received a letter from a woman who planned to get braces. She feared that her orthodontia might hurt her husband when she gave him oral sex. I hope it's not too late to share a story from my early days as a doctor. In the summer of 1949 I was a resident in urology at a large Midwestern hospital. Late one evening, two couples came into the emergency room, one leading the other. The second couple caught my attention. The husband was walking backward, followed by his wife, who was bent over at the waist. The first couple had covered the woman's head and the man's midsection with a towel. We led them to an exam room. You guessed it. The uppermost tip of the husband's foreskin had become wedged in his wife's new braces. She couldn't speak. The man was afraid he'd have to be circumcised. I did a penile block and injected the foreskin with anesthesia. A few careful cuts and he was free. A dental resident removed the skin from the woman's braces while I sutured the fellow's penis. An hour later, he was back in the ER. The couple had gone home and had intercourse, and his stitches broke.—G.G., Scottsdale, Arizona

Thanks for sharing, doc. A few stitches wouldn't have stopped us, either.

You're at a bar after work, relaxing with buddies. The bartender approaches and says, "The young lady across the bar bought this drink for you." What's the protocol? Do you eye her and raise the drink in toast? Do you excuse yourself and walk over to talk to her? Do you wave her over to join you? Also, if things go well and she asks you to leave with her, what's the best way to excuse yourself from your buddies while causing the least distraction and disruption?—A.B., Timonium, Maryland

You're assuming that you find the woman attractive. The challenge is when you don't. Either way, a gentleman acknowledges the drink by raising his glass. The woman should then walk over to say hello. If she's with friends, they should accompany her (really, how often do young women visit bars alone?). She can pigeonhole you after introductions have been made. It's unlikely she's going to ask you to leave with her, let alone give you her number, until she knows you better. Even with your wit and charm, that could take a few hours. By then, your friends will probably have called it a night or found other distractions. Regardless, they aren't going to mind.

My boyfriend and I love oral sex and frequently spend hours pleasuring each other. After the first 15 minutes or so, my saliva is no longer enough to keep his erection lubricated. Is there anything I can do to help this situation?—P.J., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

You could use the old ice cube trick, which he'll enjoy, but you may start to feel like a blender if you have to keep popping them into your mouth. A better option is an edible lube. Several companies make them in flavors such as vanilla, banana, cherry,

ILLUSTRATION BY ISTVAN BANYAI

pineapple, cinnamon, bubble gum and piña colada. They're water-based and compatible with latex, and some heat up when you blow on them. You can order a sampler pack for $10 from Condomania (800-926-6366 or online at condomania.com).

What exactly is a "dram" of whiskey?—M.F., Providence, Rhode Island

In most Scottish bars it's the equivalent, more or less, of a double. The Scotch Whiskey Association claims that a dram applies only to Scotch whiskey, and that the precise measure is determined by the generosity of the pourer. When enjoying drams, you are dramming or being drammed. Until health and safety regulators stepped in during the Seventies, Scottish distillery workers often received drams as performance incentives or with lunch and tea.

I am an African American man in an interracial marriage. Before I married, I dated women of various races, and almost all shared a belief that black men have extraordinary genitalia. At first I took this as flattery, but as I got older, I started to wonder if it could be considered racist. The problem is, some of my black friends seem to believe it too. Am I being too sensitive about this? Is there any truth to this belief?—G.B., Atlanta, Georgia

There haven't been any comprehensive studies to determine if erection size differs among races, mainly because it doesn't matter, or as scientists will tell you, it has "little physiological consequence." Alfred Kinsey asked 2376 whites and 59 blacks to measure their penises and mail him the results; the average erection, regardless of race, measured about six inches. The belief that all black men have large penises dates back to at least the 15th century. It was later encouraged by anthropologists who drew broad conclusions based on their discovery of single well-endowed tribesmen. This particular myth reflects the stereotype that all black men are sexual beasts. Not that other races haven't tried to claim the penis prize for their own. One "sexologist" who measured the penises of a sample of men of various nationalities found that the longest white, English penis extended at least two inches beyond the longest African, German, French, Danish, American or Swedish variety. The researcher was, of course, a white Englishman.

A friend says that you should set your parking brake once a week to keep it operating correctly. I'd never heard that before. Is it sound advice?—W.N., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

It's not a bad idea. In many cars, the parking brake adjusts the rear disc brakes (check your owner's manual). If you're driving a stick and parking on an incline, curb your wheels, set your brake and leave the car in gear. If you're not on a hill, set the brake but leave the car in neutral. If someone bumps your car, and it's in gear, it could damage the transmission. With automatics, set the parking brake, release the foot brake and shift to park, in that order. If you live in a snow state, set your brake about once a week to keep it from rusting. (As one brake manufacturer says, "We sell a lot of parking brake cables in Pittsburgh.") If your car is several years old and you haven't been using the brake regularly, have it checked before you do. It may be damaged, and the cable could seize in the casing.

What can you tell me about MDMA, a.k.a. ecstasy? I have yet to find anything bad written about it. The most recent book I read is called *Psychedelic Drugs Reconsidered*. The authors of the book are from Harvard. They have an interesting take on psychedelic drugs (who'd expect less after Timothy Leary?), but they have nothing negative to say about ecstasy. For five years I lived and taught in eastern Europe. While there I spent nearly a year experimenting with ecstasy. Since returning to the U.S. I feel more in control of my life and attribute this to my experiences with the drug. I encourage others to try it with people they are close to, be it lovers or friends. It is a mind-opening experience if used in the appropriate setting. Do you know of any evidence that it can be harmful if it's not abused? And why do you think it's illegal?—M.H., Washington, D.C.

We can't explain why ecstasy is illegal any more than we can explain why marijuana is illegal. Like many drugs, MDMA can be harmful or even deadly if taken without due care, but Dr. Lester Grinspoon (co-author of the book you cite) believes it could be useful for insight-oriented psychotherapy. Dr. Grinspoon's book came out before ecstasy became popular, which is why you find so little about it there. If you're looking for up-to-date information about the pleasures and risks of ecstasy and other drugs, pick up a copy of Buzzed: The Straight Facts About the Most Used and Abused Drugs From Alcohol to Ecstasy. Studies have suggested that frequent use of MDMA may cause neurological damage, but researchers can't say precisely how much is too much and how often is too often, or even what the long-term effects might be. Also remember that because it's illegal, you're dealing with a street drug. While ecstasy is relatively easy to make, it's harder to purify. Pills sold as ecstasy have included amphetamine, ephedrine, caffeine and ketamine. Proceed with caution.

What is the Advisor's opinion about getting involved with a married woman? Does that opinion change if the woman is involved in a bad marriage?—F.F., Oakland, California

They're all involved in bad marriages. That's why she's seeing you.

I've been dating my girlfriend for seven years. She's a smoker. The problem, if you can call it that, is that I am incredibly turned on when she lights up. Against my better judgment, I told her this. Now she has become almost obsessed. She smokes during foreplay. She wears dark red lipstick and alternates sucking on her cigarette and my cock. If we happen to be out with friends, she'll always get my attention before she lights up because she knows it makes me hard. Two of her co-workers told her during a cigarette break that their boyfriends also are turned on by watching them smoke. One of these women told my girlfriend to buy Virginia Slims 120s because the foil inside the pack has small ridges. She said to empty the box and then squeeze the foil to fit around my penis. My girlfriend did this and gave me an incredible hand job. Now she wants to invite one of her friends to smoke a cigarette in front of me while she (my girlfriend) gives me head. I told her I don't get turned on by watching anyone smoke but her, but she promises that it would just be an experiment. Apparently the friend is OK with it as long as she only has to flirt and show her tits. Meanwhile, my girlfriend has purchased a velvet-lined cigarette case to stroke me with. It's torture because she says that unlike the cigarette packs, the box is too expensive for me to come into. We also have a normal sex life that doesn't involve her habit. But this has happened so fast that I guess I'm overwhelmed. Is this normal behavior, or does one of us have a problem? I'm slightly worried about it but also don't want her to stop.—M.D., Memphis, Tennessee

We've always been warned not to smoke in bed, but it sounds in your case like there's no danger of anyone falling asleep. Your preference is far from unusual; the Internet is full of sites such as smokesigs.com that cater to butt men. Since you also have what you consider normal sex—which apparently occurs when your girlfriend decides to put out her cigarette—we wouldn't worry about it. It's a game: You told your girlfriend how to take control of your desire, and she obliged. The question is, where will the relationship go if she quits? And can you share a cigarette after sex, or does that get you all revved up again?

All reasonable questions—from fashion, food and drink, stereo and sports cars to dating dilemmas, taste and etiquette—will be personally answered if the writer includes a self-addressed, stamped envelope. The most provocative, pertinent questions will be presented in these pages each month. Write the Playboy Advisor, PLAYBOY, *680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611, or advisor@playboy.com. Look for responses to our most frequently asked questions at playboy.com/faq, and check out the Advisor's latest collection of sex tricks, 365 Ways to Improve Your Sex Life, available in bookstores or by phoning 800-423-9494.*

FLASH. BANG. YOU'RE DEAD

SWAT teams make dramatic TV but horrible justice

By JAMES BOVARD

When University of Texas student Charles Whitman climbed the Texas Tower in 1966 and began shooting people, the Austin police were caught underarmed. Officials called in off-duty cops and asked for citizens to bring their deer rifles. TV footage showed puffs of concrete as cops' return fire chipped away at the sniper's position. Eventually, officers climbed the stairs to the observatory deck and patrolman Ramiro Martinez emptied his handgun into the suspect. Then, seizing a shotgun from a fellow officer, he finished the job.

The well-publicized shootings provided the pretext for many police departments to gear up for war and changed both the weaponry and tactics of law enforcement.

Police chief Daryl Gates launched the nation's first Special Weapons and Tactics team in Los Angeles in 1971. Gates' unit became famous for demolishing homes with tanks that were equipped with battering rams. Law enforcement went on steroids and became larger than life.

There are now more than 30,000 SWAT teams in the U.S. Peter Kraska, a criminal justice scholar at Eastern Kentucky University, estimated that the police's use of SWAT teams has increased by 538 percent in units formed since 1980. Ninety percent of law enforcement departments serving populations over 50,000 that responded to a 1995 survey by Kraska reported having an active paramilitary unit.

Since 1995, the Pentagon has inundated law enforcement agencies with thousands of machine guns, more than 100 armored personnel carriers, scores of grenade launchers and more than a million other pieces of military hardware. Instead of relying on street smarts and old-fashioned investigative work, police departments now depend on military weaponry and intimidation.

SWAT teams, envisioned as a defense against urban terrorists, have become a threat to innocent life.

• At 11 P.M. on August 9, 1999, 20 SWAT officers from the El Monte, California police force attacked a home occupied by six sleeping people in Compton, about 20 miles away. Police shot off the locks on both the front and rear doors and exploded a flash-bang grenade.

Two SWAT team members wearing masks rushed into the bedroom occupied by 64-year-old Mario Paz, a father of six and grandfather of 14, and his wife, Maria Luisa, who screamed, "My husband is sick! He's an old man!" One policeman shot Paz twice in the back. Members of the Paz family later said they thought the house was being robbed. The police targeted the house because a narcotics suspect had occasionally used the Paz' mailing address. Police made no effort to determine who was in the house before attacking.

• In Osawatomie, Kansas at 1:25 A.M. on February 13, 1999, police from three jurisdictions smashed into the home of Willie Heard, searching for cocaine. They set off a flash-bang grenade. Heard's 16-year-old daughter, Ashley, was frightened and screamed, "Daddy!" Heard apparently thought his daughter was in danger and picked up an unloaded .22 bolt-action rifle (not the weapon of choice of major drug terrorists). An officer then forced open the door to Heard's bedroom, saw him with the rifle and opened fire, killing him. Police records noted that 11 seconds had elapsed since the forced entry. County Attorney David Miller did the subsequent investigation and announced seven weeks later: "The investigation indicates that the officer acted in self-defense and in defense of another officer."

• In Beaver Dam, Wisconsin on April 17, 1995, the police carried out a raid against Scott Bryant, a 29-year-old tech college student living in a trailer with his eight-year-old son. The first officer through the door shouted, "Search warrant! Search warrant!" Then, as Bryant was being placed on the couch to be handcuffed, detective Robert Neuman came through the door and shot him in the chest. Neuman later said he did not recall firing the shot. The local district attorney suggested Neuman might have been startled when his colleague shouted "search warrant." A neighbor recalled: "There was no knock or announcement. It was a kick through the door and a shot." Police targeted Bryant after a month's search of his garbage turned up trace amounts of marijuana on four different occasions. A subsequent investigation by DA Robert

Wells concluded that the sheriff's detective "handled his gun in a negligent manner" because he entered the trailer with his finger on the trigger. No charges were filed against the detective. A small amount of marijuana was found in the trailer. Dodge County, Wisconsin later paid $950,000 to settle the federal civil rights lawsuit filed by Bryant's survivors.

• At 1:30 A.M. on July 12, 1998, a squad of six Houston police charged into the apartment of Pedro Oregon Navarro. The 22-year-old fled into his bedroom; police smashed down the door and, when they saw that Navarro had a handgun, unleashed some 30 shots. Navarro died, shot 12 times, nine in the back. The police had no warrant for the search but claimed that a confidential informant said he had witnessed a drug deal at the address. Police did no further investigation before attacking. (No drugs were found.) "I don't know of any authority at this point that gave the police the right to be in that residence," said Harris County District Attorney John Holmes. "But that doesn't make the shooting a crime." Holmes explained that the police "do not have to sit still for a citizen pointing a firearm at them, even if they entered unlawfully." A grand jury thought otherwise and indicted two officers for violating Navarro's civil rights.

• At 2:30 A.M. on October 12, 1995, six members of the elite Street Crime Action Team smashed down an apartment door on the west side of Topeka, Kansas. Stephen Medford Shively, a 34-year-old college student, was terrified and called 911.

Police claim that while they were battering down the door, they announced who they were and that they were carrying out a search for marijuana. Apparently, not loudly enough. Shively fired through the door at the intruders, hitting and killing police officer Tony Patterson. The other officers then shot and wounded Shively. The city district attorney announced she would seek capital murder charges against Shively. A Kansas jury acquitted him, finding that he acted in self-defense. (He was convicted on drug charges and aggravated assault and spent two years in prison.) A Kansas appeals court concluded that police officers used a misleading affidavit to get the warrant: "Regrettably, the loss of an officer's life might have been prevented if the affidavit had been candid and not designed to mislead the magistrate into issuing the search warrant."

• On December 16, 1996, the Secret Service, the Customs Service and a swarm of local police (including two SWAT teams as well as a canine team) launched a predawn raid on a house in Albuquerque. The purpose of the raid: seizing counterfeit drivers' licenses, birth certificates and checks. Sixty-nine-year-old Ralph Garrison, who lived next to and owned the house being raided, awoke to the sounds of windows breaking and doors being smashed in. Garrison came outside—then raced to dial 911: "They're breaking in with axes and all kinds of stuff." Police claimed they identified themselves but, with a Customs Service helicopter hovering overhead, it is unclear whether Garrison understood. Garrison repeatedly pleaded with the 911 operator to "hurry up" and send police to the scene to stop the destruction of his rental house. He finally declared, "I've got my gun and I'm going to shoot the son of a bitch," and showed up in the back doorway with a .22 pistol. Three cops responded with AR-15s (the civilian version of a military assault rifle). A dozen shots were fired by the cops. Garrison still had the phone in his hand when he was cut down—the 911 tape ends with the sound of gunfire. The police also shot Garrison's 14-year-old dog.

When Garrison's family filed a civil rights lawsuit, a federal judge ruled that the officers who killed Garrison had reacted reasonably.

Garrison still had the phone in his hand when he was cut down—the 911 tape ends with the sound of gunfire.

• Thirty-three-year-old Larry Harper, an unemployed plumber in Albuquerque, was distraught. He called his brother and told him he was going to kill himself; his brother alerted the police. One street cop and nine SWAT team members, plus a canine team, found Harper on a trail at a nearby picnic area, whereupon he fled, demanding that they stop chasing him because he had done nothing wrong. The SWAT team drove Harper into a stand of juniper bushes. Family members arrived and requested a chance to talk to Harper, and Harper told the SWAT team he would come out if his brother could witness his surrender. The SWAT team refused both requests.

The police sniper who killed Harper with two shots claimed he saw Harper raise a pistol and point it in the direction of the officers. In 1998 the Albuquerque Police Department paid $200,000 to settle a lawsuit brought by Harper's survivors.

• On the morning of August 19, 1994, sheriff's deputies in Riverside County, California smashed into the mobile home of 87-year-old Donald Harrison and his 77-year-old wife, Elsie. The elderly couple was in bed when the deputies entered, looking for a drug lab. The couple never recovered from the experience: Donald died from a heart attack four days later.

According to Harrison's son, the search warrant described a mobile home surrounded by a four-foot ivy-covered fence; the Harrisons' home had no such fence. The house targeted was listed as being made of corrugated aluminum; the Harrisons' home was made of fiberboard. And the Harrisons' trailer was painted a different color than the trailer identified in the search warrant.

• On March 13, 1996, 12 SWAT officers wearing camouflage fatigues smashed into a two-story condominium in a quiet residential neighborhood close to a naval base in Oxnard, California. Officer James Jensen Jr. went up the stairs and threw a flash-bang grenade into the hallway. Daniel Christian, the raid commander, followed Jensen up the stairs, then mistakenly pumped three shotgun rounds into his back and side.

The police initially explained that Christian "mistook his partner for a

suspected drug dealer." The house was empty at the time of the raid; police had done no surveillance of the residence in the preceding five days. Christian had been written up two months earlier for "poor judgment" and "unprofessional conduct." The internal police report recommended his removal from the SWAT team.

Jensen's family filed suit; the city settled for $3.5 million. Christian was finally removed from the SWAT team after a disagreement with a fellow officer.

WACO

Nothing reveals the danger of the SWAT mentality better than the response of the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms to the Branch Davidians in 1993. The ATF could easily have arrested David Koresh on gun charges and, after he was in custody, carried out a search of the Davidians' residence. Koresh had cooperated with authorities on several occasions. He routinely went shopping in nearby Waco and often jogged outside of the compound. Nine days before the raid on February 28, two undercover ATF agents (whom Koresh and other Davidians had recognized) visited the Davidian residence and met with Koresh to go shooting. Koresh, two other Davidians and the agents proceeded to have a pleasant time shooting two AR-15 assault rifles, an ATF agent's .38 Super pistol and two SIG Sauer pistols.

Koresh provided much of the ammo for the plinking.

A congressional investigation later concluded: "The ATF deliberately chose not to arrest Koresh outside the Davidian residence and instead determined to use a dynamic-entry approach. The bias toward the use of force may in large part be explained by a culture within ATF, a propensity to engage in aggressive law enforcement."

The code words for launching the assault were "show time," indicative of the fact that at least 11 media outlets were there to witness the serving of the warrant. On February 28, 1993, 76 ATF agents drove up to the front of the Branch Davidians' residence in two large cattle trailers. Federal law requires that agents knock and announce their purpose before forcibly entering a residence. However, the ATF planned for one group of agents to storm the front door while a second group climbed ladders and smashed in through second-story windows. They had rehearsed the dynamic entry for three days at a nearby military base. The timetable—seven seconds to get through the front door, 22 seconds to secure the second story, 60 seconds to neutralize the compound—didn't allow much time for constitutional niceties. No single agent had been assigned the task of announcing their presence or the purpose of the raid. The ATF would later admit that it had never rehearsed a peaceful entry.

According to Koresh, when he saw the cattle trailers pull up and the ATF agents dressed in military-style uniforms, he opened the front door and said, "Get back. There are women and children here." The ATF answered with a hail of bullets; Koresh was hit twice. The government maintains that an unarmed Koresh slammed the door and that cult members were waiting in ambush.

Four ATF agents ended up dead, more than 20 were wounded and six Davidians perished. The surviving agents were allowed to retreat from the area after negotiating a ceasefire.

After the ATF snafu, the FBI was brought in to resolve the conflict with the Branch Davidians. Fifty-one days later, the FBI's Hostage Rescue Team launched an armored vehicle and tear gas assault on the residence occupied by scores of women and children. More than 70 people subsequently died.

LITTLETON

And what happens when a SWAT team performs its intended role—confronting crazed gunmen? On April 20, 1999, students Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold went on a shooting spree in Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado. By the time the two ended their massacre by committing suicide, 12 students and one teacher were dead or mortally wounded. Dave Sanders bled to death because the police took nearly four hours to reach the room he was in—even though students had placed a large sign announcing "One Bleeding to Death" in the window.

The first police officer on the scene exchanged fire with Harris and Klebold. Shortly after noon, police radioed that they needed to be resupplied with ammunition. It arrived—in the form of almost 800 policemen, enough to form eight SWAT teams from five jurisdictions. Eventually, the on-site commander sent 50 members into the school.

Jefferson County Sheriff John Stone later explained: "We had initial people there right away, but we couldn't get in. We were way outgunned." Jefferson County SWAT team commander Terry Manwaring concurred: "I just knew the killers were armed and were better equipped than we were." SWAT teams made no effort to confront the killers in action; instead, they devoted their efforts to frisking students and marching them out of the building with their hands on their heads.

The police response was paralyzed by concerns for officer safety. A spokesman for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department said, "We had no idea who was a victim and who was a suspect. And a dead police officer would not be able to help anyone." Donn Kraemer of the Lakewood SWAT team explained: "If we went in and tried to take them and got shot, we would be part of the problem. We're supposed to bring order to chaos, not add to the chaos."

As one former law enforcement officer observed: "Everything the SWAT teams did that day was geared around fear. A great flaw in the training for SWAT teams is that they're so worried about officer safety that they've lost their ability to fight."

The New York Times reported that most of the SWAT teams were not sent in "for fear that they might set off a new gunfight." Sheriff Stone justified the nonresponse: "We didn't want to have one SWAT team shooting another SWAT team."

James Bovard is author of Freedom in Chains, published by St. Martin's.

DRUG WAR REFUGEE

one woman's flight from injustice

BY BARRY BROWN

One spring afternoon in 1998, Renee Boje arrived at a Canadian checkpoint just over the border from Bellingham, Washington. She had only $50 cash and a backpack filled with her belongings. The Canadian border guard asked her name, then typed it into a computer, which promptly produced an official record. It indicated that Boje had been accused of a crime in the U.S. but that the charges had been dropped. The computer didn't provide specifics, so the guard asked Boje what the crime had been. Murder? Armed robbery? Kidnapping?

Marijuana, Boje replied. The guard waved her through. Boje walked for a few minutes until she could no longer see the checkpoint, then turned cartwheels.

Boje had good reason to feel relieved, though her celebration would prove premature. As a fringe player in one of the most closely watched drug prosecutions in America, Boje would be fighting deportation within a year. As you read this, she may well be back in a U.S. jail.

Her saga began in July 1997, one year after California passed Proposition 215, a referendum allowing the use of marijuana for the treatment of pain or long-term illness. Federal agents raided the Bel Air home of cancer patient Todd McCormick, where they arrested McCormick, Boje and six others on the charge of conspiring to grow and sell marijuana. Writer Peter McWilliams was later arrested.

The DEA agents claim they saw Boje watering and moving some of the 4000 plants on the premises. Boje, an artist, says she had been hired to provide illustrations for a book McCormick and McWilliams were preparing on medicinal marijuana.

Boje spent 72 hours in a Los Angeles jail before charges were dropped. She then went to work raising money for McCormick's defense. When Boje's lawyer learned the government was planning to reinstate the charges against her, he advised her to leave the country—or face a possible sentence of ten years to life.

CHARLIE POWELL

On learning of Boje's whereabouts, U.S. officials asked Canada to extradite her to face justice. Boje, in turn, asked Canada to consider her a political refugee, just as it might consider a refugee from Cuba or Iraq. Boje's support of medicinal marijuana places her in the middle of a war raging between federal prosecutors who reject such use and the states that have legalized the cultivation, possession and consumption of cannabis for sick people.

Within the borders of the U.S., the case is viewed as an interesting collision between states rights (seven states have legalized medicinal marijuana) and federal will (General Barry McCaffrey and Attorney General Janet Reno defend "congressional determination"—i.e., the lawmakers' right to draft draconian measures).

On November 5, 1999 federal judge George King ruled that the Bel Air defendants could not refer to Proposition 215, nor could they claim their actions were legal under state law. They couldn't mention the medical benefits of marijuana nor claim that McCormick's illness constitutes a "medical necessity." The accused had manufactured marijuana, pure and simple, and that was against federal law. Stripped of their only defense, McCormick and McWilliams agreed to a plea bargain.

In fighting extradition, Boje had planned to argue that U.S. prisons have become so brutal that placing her in one, even to await trial, constitutes punishment that is too harsh by Canadian standards. Boje told members of the press that she had been repeatedly strip-searched during her 72-hour incarceration. Her experience is certainly not unique. Amnesty International has documented the widespread abuse of women in U.S. prisons, "including male staff touching inmates' breasts and genitals when conducting searches, male staff watching inmates while they are naked, and instances of rape." Norway recently refused to extradite an American charged with smuggling hashish, citing "inhumane" conditions in U.S. prisons.

Boje also hoped Canadian authorities would respond to the patent injustice of the proposed sentence. Had she been charged in Canada solely with watering a marijuana plant, Boje's sentence likely would have been probation. However, had she been licensed by Canada to grow and use medicinal marijuana, or had she worked in the illegal but officially tolerated Compassion Club in Vancouver, she might simply have received a stern warning to be more discreet. U.S. agents, however, produced a charge of conspiracy to manufacture and sell. Under Canadian law, courts must deny refugee status if a similar charge in Canada carries a possible sentence of more than ten years in prison (which it does). Lawmakers to the north view conspiracy as an offense deserving of a maximum life sentence.

As of late December, a Canadian judge had yet to render a final ruling on the extradition request. For an update on Boje's case, visit thecompassionclub.org/renee.

LOAN SHARKS

the drug warriors target financial aid

By JOSHUA GREEN

Now and again our elected leaders demonstrate their capacity for revenge and settling old scores, thus exposing the raw motivation of the war on drugs. In 1991 Representative Gerald Solomon (R.–N.Y.) seemed to go after the ghost of the counterculture. A notorious proponent of the drug war, Solomon referred to his philosophical opponents as "unshaven, shaggy-haired members of the drug culture, poor excuses for Americans, wearing their tiny, round wire-rimmed glasses, a protester's symbol of the blame-America-first crowd." Wanting to make the world—or at least college campuses—safe for young conservatives, in 1992 he tried to push a bill through Congress that would have denied financial aid to students caught with drugs. Because it would not have affected those students whose parents could afford college tuition or a good defense lawyer, the law seemed to target the poor. Like so many bad ideas, Solomon's proposal lost momentum and died a quiet death.

But many Republicans are loath to pass up a chance to punish "liberals." Beneath the Sturm und Drang of the Clinton impeachment hearings, Indiana congressman Mark Souder renewed the attack on left-leaning students. He attached an amendment to the Higher Education Act of 1998 that denied federal financial aid to students who'd been convicted of possessing or selling any amount of illegal drugs. Souder had no trouble garnering support this time around. The act, with Souder's amendment intact, passed in the House of Representatives by a vote of 414 to four. The Senate passed a similar measure unanimously, and President Clinton signed a compromise bill into law.

Beginning in July, students who are seeking financial aid from Uncle Sam must fill out a form that asks if they've ever been convicted of a drug offense, even a misdemeanor. Tell the truth and kiss your federal financial aid goodbye. No student loans, no Pell grants, no work study. For many people, that would mean no college education.

Lie on the application (perhaps because you assume you'll be forgiven your "youthful indiscretions") and you could face a $10,000 fine and prison time.

The new law is a model of micromanagement. Students convicted of possession lose their financial aid for one year. The punishment for a second offense is two years. After a third, aid is denied indefinitely. Students convicted of selling drugs have their aid stripped for two years following the first offense and indefinitely following the second.

MATTHEW STRAUSS

At best these punishments could be considered piling on; at worst they're irrelevant. Given the draconian drug laws and mandatory minimum sentences currently in effect, would a student convicted of possession or selling even make it onto campus? Or was Souder afraid that student convicts would use college loans to pay for correspondence courses?

Restricting access to education is only half the government's plan. If students want their aid reinstated before their suspension ends, they must submit to random drug tests and a government-mandated rehabilitation program. In cities such as New York and Baltimore, where rehab slots are already scarce, college students seeking treatment will find themselves vying for position with junkies who for years have been unable to find adequate treatment.

Despite the lopsided congressional vote, not everyone supports Representative Souder's plan. The NAACP opposes it on the grounds that minorities compose a disproportionate number of drug convictions and are therefore likely to suffer the greatest effects. Souder misrepresented this point by claiming in the University of Virginia's student newspaper that "approximately 60 percent of defendants convicted of drug offenses were white and 38 percent were black. Gross disparities in conviction rates do not exist."

Wanna bet? Those numbers reflect only federal drug cases. When state and federal cases are combined, the numbers tell a different story: More than 55 percent of those convicted of drug offenses are black, despite the fact that blacks represent 12.7 percent of the population (and a slightly larger percentage of drug users). Souder's plan, like so much of the war on drugs, further disenfranchises the disenfranchised.

Souder dismisses those who oppose the new law as "drug legalizers." There is no middle ground for zealots. In Souder's view, you're either an upstanding citizen or a drug user. What makes the law particularly odd is that being convicted of rape or murder doesn't disqualify a student from receiving federal aid. But Congress doesn't have a zero tolerance policy toward violence, only drugs.

READER

BOOKSTORE CENSORSHIP

I am a third-year student at Harvard Law School. Occasionally, I enjoy reading a *Playboy Interview* whenever work and classes permit. A few days ago, I had such a rare break and went looking for the current issue at the Harvard Coop. I discovered that it does not carry PLAYBOY. The store does carry magazines with male nudity.

I wouldn't take the time to write this letter if I did not feel that the bookstore was offending the First Amendment for the sake of Harvard's whining liberals. What's your opinion?

Steve Thaler
Cambridge, Massachusetts

The Harvard Coop, despite its name, is a private business that is free to decide which publications it will carry. Fortunately, there is an easy way to deal with this sort of priggishness: Subscribe.

WHO CHANGED SEX?

I was reading James R. Petersen's *Forum* article "Who Changed Sex?" (December) and was surprised by a glaring omission from the list. Well, maybe not an omission—the notable I am concerned with received a nod for "runner-up"—but Petersen didn't feel the need to name the man who invented the water bed, science fiction author Robert Heinlein. In his writings, Heinlein has long treated sex as it should be: as a session of pleasurable exercise between two or more consenting individuals. In Heinlein's view, skin is nothing more than skin. For anyone not familiar with Heinlein, such classics as *Stranger in a Strange Land*, *Time Enough for Love* and *I Will Fear No Evil* illustrate my point. Most Heinlein fans, Petersen included, will agree that the author struck a major blow against sexual conservatives.

I fear that time may have passed Heinlein by, and many younger readers may not be familiar with his work. But this makes it all the more important that he be mentioned in PLAYBOY's retrospective. Amateur sexual historians interested in learning where Heinlein got his wild idea are advised to check out his books *Waldo and Magic, Inc.* and *Expanded Universe*.

Chris Jackson
Fort Collins, Colorado

FOR THE RECORD

SIDEWALK SEX

"I am an American citizen, and I can fuck my girlfriend anywhere I want to."

—The explanation given by a 27-year-old Wisconsin man who police allege had sex with his girlfriend on the sidewalk outside a Madison bar as onlookers threw money at the couple.

While Heinlein did indeed describe a water bed in his 1961 classic "Stranger in a Strange Land," credit for inventing the modern water bed generally goes to Charles Hall, who designed one as a class project at San Francisco State University in 1969. But we'll give you credit for calling attention to a man who certainly influenced sex in this century: In addition to the water bed, Heinlein envisioned sex changes and universal free love and predicted that the country would be swept up by Christian fundamentalists with elaborate propaganda networks.

MARINOL MYTHS

"The General's Loophole" by Peter McWilliams (*The Playboy Forum*, December) left out one important detail about Marinol: the cost. At my local Wal-Mart, Marinol retails for $202.92 for 30 five-milligram doses. Compared with the street pharmacist's cost of around $40 per quarter ounce of the natural stuff (or so I've been told) the price seems outrageous.

Drug czar Barry McCaffrey may have once again shot himself in the foot, but the low-income people and those without health insurance got it right between the eyes. Sadly, that's become a familiar refrain in the drug war.

Nathan Woodhull III
Lima, Ohio

COST OF RIGHTS

In James Bovard's "The Cost of Rights" (*The Playboy Forum*, October), he states that "James Madison drafted the Bill of Rights." I have been under the impression that Thomas Jefferson wrote the Bill of Rights. While this doesn't in any way detract from Bovard's excellent examination of what our government has become, I am nonetheless curious about the Bill of Rights' true author. Was Bovard mistaken?

Bill Flanagan
Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Although many voices called for a declaration of individual rights, James Madison drafted and saw through Congress what became the Bill of Rights (Jefferson was in Paris). Madison, originally a Federalist who believed that the constitutional government would never encroach on individual rights, came to see the wisdom of safeguards.

WAYWARD SON

In the three years since you published James Bovard's article "Prison Sentences of the Politically Connected" (*The Playboy Forum*, April 1997), I've seen several updates from PLAYBOY readers in your letters pages. Please add this to your list: Last July, Morgan Grams, the 21-year-old son of Republican Senator Rod Grams of Minnesota, was pulled over by Anoka County police at the behest of his father. The elder Grams had received a phone call from an acquaintance of his son who reported that Morgan had borrowed a rental SUV and refused to return it. When the police located Grams, they found ten bags of marijuana and several cans of beer in the truck, along with two juvenile passengers. They didn't arrest Grams, who had showed them an expired U.S. Senate staff pass card, even though one of the bags was discovered beneath his seat and he was on probation at the time for underage drinking and driving. Police instead arrested a 17-year-old passenger who was later convicted of drug possession and served more than a month in a

RESPONSE

juvenile detention center. As for Grams, officers put him in the front seat of an unmarked police car and gave him a lift back to his motel. He was not charged with a crime.

Perhaps the continuing coverage (by PLAYBOY and others) of this type of shameless favoritism is beginning to have an effect. After these incidents were documented in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, the Anoka County Sheriff's office asked for a special investigation to determine whether or not Morgan Grams received favorable treatment from police when he was pulled over.

Bob Thomas
Minneapolis, Minnesota

After a review, the special investigation concluded that Anoka County deputies did not follow proper procedure when they stopped Morgan Grams. (They did not file a report on the incident until November, following the coverage by the Star Tribune.) However, the investigator found no evidence that the elder Grams had requested favorable treatment for his son. In December county officials decided to charge Grams with possession of marijuana in a motor vehicle and driving without his license, both misdemeanors.

We would like to hear your point of view. Send questions, opinions and quirky stuff to: The Playboy Forum Reader Response, PLAYBOY, 680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611. Please include a daytime phone number. Fax number: 312-951-2939. E-mail: forum@playboy.com (please include your city and state).

THE HMH AWARDS

this year's first amendment champs

In May 1999 senior Nicholas Becker learned that his high school in Sunderland, Maryland planned to include the Lord's Prayer as part of graduation ceremonies. Armed with printouts of legal opinions that he had pulled from the Internet, Becker made the case to his principal that the student-led prayer violates the constitutional separation of church and state. The ACLU and the state's attorney general supported Becker's argument.

The principal agreed to replace the prayer with a "moment of reflection." However, when the time came, a few hundred members of the audience, including the county's highest elected official, defiantly recited the prayer.

Becker left the building in protest. When he tried to reenter to retrieve his diploma, police turned him away. Subsequently, he was barred from attending a postgraduation cruise for which he had bought a ticket. The school superintendent told him that because he had not attended graduation, he could not board.

Becker's courage to stand up for the rights of those not sharing the majority beliefs—be they members of other religions, agnostics or nonbelievers—earned him an HMH First Amendment Award. In a year when school officials practice zero tolerance in lockstep, it was encouraging to find one voice willing to stand against the majority.

The prayer mob went on to form the Right to Pray Coalition, a group with a mission to "secure the right for student-led prayer." They have their own website; we'll be hearing more.

The founding fathers understood the need to separate church and state. Today, many would like to blur the lines, especially in the field of education. Creationists seek to silence the teaching of evolution and have succeeded in Kansas, Oklahoma, Kentucky and New Mexico.

Opposing the creationist camp is the National Center for Science Education, a nonprofit organization devoted to ensuring that religious neutrality is maintained in the science curriculum of America's public schools. Operating on an annual budget of $300,000, the center provides materials and expert testimony for school board hearings. As executive director, HMH Award winner Dr. Eugenie Scott is on the front lines of the debate.

Jeri McGiverin and Elaine Williamson won an HMH award for their work with Mainstream Loudoun, a group whose mission is "to counter the imposition through public policy of one religious tradition over another." When the library board in Loudoun County, Virginia voted to require all public computers, including those used by adults, to be equipped with filtering devices, McGiverin and Williamson fought back and won. When the board referred to the two as "battle-axes" the women showed up wearing buttons that read "Battle-axes for First Amendment rights."

Equally devoted to free speech, retired high school social studies teacher Donald Parker received an HMH lifetime achievement award. For more than 30 years he has prepared exhibits that have taught high school students about civil liberties and censorship.

The hostility toward the First Amendment is not limited to schools and libraries. The media are under attack. Bruce Sanford, general counsel for the Society of Professional Journalists, has defended more than 1000 libel and free speech cases throughout the world. He received an HMH award for his latest book, *Don't Shoot the Messenger: How Our Growing Hatred of the Media Threatens Free Speech for All of Us*.

Our judges also recognized those who exercise their First Amendment rights with a flourish. Documentary filmmaker Michael Moore won an HMH award for being Michael Moore. From *Roger and Me*, his guerilla-style documentary on the effects of an auto plant closing, to the subversive commentaries of *The Awful Truth*, Moore excels in creating mischief with a message.

NEWSFRONT

what's happening in the sexual and social arenas

WINDOW UNDRESSING

CHAGRIN FALLS, OHIO—*To entice passersby to shop at her antiques store, Frances Burmeister placed four sculptures of topless women in the front window. The*

hand-carved pine figures are turn-of-the-century beer taps; kegs fit into the waist and the spouts protrude from the breasts. The display didn't sit well with some residents, who demanded that city officials remove it. A toy shop owner said she found the sculptures demeaning because they portray women as "second-class citizens." In response, Burmeister taped white mustaches on two of the figures and hung a sign that read GOT MILK? *Folk art collectors eventually purchased the sculptures. "I'm sorry to see them go," Burmeister said. "This has been a lot of fun."*

OUT FOR BLOOD

TALLAHASSEE—*In 1984, Thomas Provenzano opened fire in an Orlando courthouse, killing one bailiff and paralyzing two others. He received the death penalty, but his lawyers argue that their client, who claims to be Jesus Christ, should not be executed because he is mentally ill. During a hearing on the case before a state House committee, Representative Howard Futch mused, "Why don't we just crucify him?"*

TOTAL LIFE MANAGEMENT

NEW YORK—*A 15-year-old boy sued a Catholic high school, claiming that administrators there violated his civil rights by expelling him over the content of his personal website. The school president said the site, which the boy maintained from home and which wasn't stored on a school computer, "wasn't in keeping with the mission of our school or the Catholic values that we espouse." He also claimed the site contained pornography and mentioned violence. The boy's father, who took down the site, said he found nothing more explicit than vulgar language. (In a posting cited in court papers, the boy had suggested that classmates walk through a local mall and shout "penis" as loudly as they could.) The school had given the student detention twice over the site, then informed him after the Columbine massacre that he would be expelled.*

UNARMED SOLDIERS

NEVIS, MINNESOTA—*Citing its zero-tolerance policy toward weapons, a high school refused to allow a graduating senior to submit a yearbook photo that showed her sitting on a cannon. The girl, who plans to enlist in the Army, had posed atop a 155mm howitzer outside a Veterans of Foreign Wars post. The school superintendent explained, "Whether it's military, recreational or sporting form, anything shaped like a gun or knife is banned." The school later allowed her to submit a photo in which the cannon was covered by a flag.*

CHICAGO—*The Chicago public school system, which has one of the largest junior ROTC programs in the country, has abolished all marksmanship-training and sport-shooting clubs. Students enrolled in JROTC or training for target competitions had been allowed to practice at indoor school ranges under close supervision. They fired pellets from air rifles. The head of the school system said the military training program should promote leadership and teamwork but not create marksmen.*

DOUBLE DOOBIE

OTTAWA, ONTARIO—*The Canadian government has given researchers approval to conduct clinical trials on the effectiveness of medical marijuana. There's one problem: To conduct the trials, scientists will need to develop a convincing fake joint. The standard in clinical research is to perform what's known as a double-blind, randomized study: Some patients receive the real drug and others are given a placebo. That's not difficult in a study of pills. But a researcher noted that trials with real and fake joints may have to involve patients who could be described as "naive."*

BANGOR, MAINE—*Voters approved a medical marijuana initiative by a 61 percent to 39 percent margin. Maine joins the list of states and districts (California, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, Arizona and Washington, D.C.) where residents have voted to allow patients to grow and use small amounts of cannabis to relieve symptoms of serious illnesses such as AIDS, glaucoma, epilepsy, multiple sclerosis and cancer. The new law allows patients to possess up to 1.25 ounces of harvested marijuana and as many as six plants, though no more than three of those may be mature.*

SEX UNDERCOVER

SALT LAKE CITY—*A small chain of grocery stores in northern Utah requires its managers to place construction paper over magazines whose racy headlines might offend Mormon customers. "They're not all out there hollering and screaming and saying, 'Take it down,' but if you ask them, they'll say it's not appropriate," said Dee Winegar, the chief executive officer of Winegars Supermarkets. The green modesty panels have saved browsing shoppers*

from seeing Glamour, Redbook, Mademoiselle and Cosmopolitan cover lines such as GET MOREGASMIC!, 23 WAYS TO MAKE HIM INSANE WITH DESIRE, THE EROTIC ASTROLOGER *and* WEDDING NIGHT SEX SECRETS.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY KEVIN POPE

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PLAYBOY INTERVIEW: JON STEWART

a candid conversation with the smartass host of the daily show about news versus entertainment, the size of garry shandling's ass and why movies get sex all wrong

Every evening, after the audience is locked and loaded but before taping begins, Jon Stewart bounds onto the set of The Daily Show to meet the people. He faces two sets of bleacher seats, cracks a few wry asides and takes questions from the crowd. Tonight a college student wants to know if Stewart will say the letters NYU on the show. Stewart mocks amazement.

"Why? If I do it for you I'll have to do it for everyone."

"Because I . . . I made a bet," the kid stammers.

Stewart is suddenly interested. "Oh? What's the bet?"

"I bet ten dollars. If you say it I win."

Stewart mulls this over. "Will you give me half?" he asks. The kid seems hesitant, so Stewart adds, "Come on. I can't feed a family on cable money."

You can on the kind of cable money Stewart's making: an estimated $1.5 million a year for four years as the new front man of The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, Comedy Central's designated successor to Politically Incorrect. And according to the critics and fans, Stewart (who also helps write and guide the show) is worth every penny. Maybe that's why, late last year, in a New York Observer column "memo to David Letterman" lamenting The Late Show's decline, Ron Rosenbaum wrote: "It started to go bad the moment your show stopped being about ridiculing big-ass, pompous television and started becoming big-ass, pompous television" and included an unexpected yet creative exit strategy: "Get Jon Stewart to replace you."

Not that Stewart is angling to move on. He has the greatest respect for Letterman, whose show helped launch Stewart's career, positioning him to have a talk show on MTV and, later, in syndication. And then there was the deal with Letterman's production company to host either a 1:30 A.M. talk show or to replace veteran Tom Snyder, for whom Stewart served as guest host, on The Late Late Show With Tom Snyder.

Are you keeping this all straight?

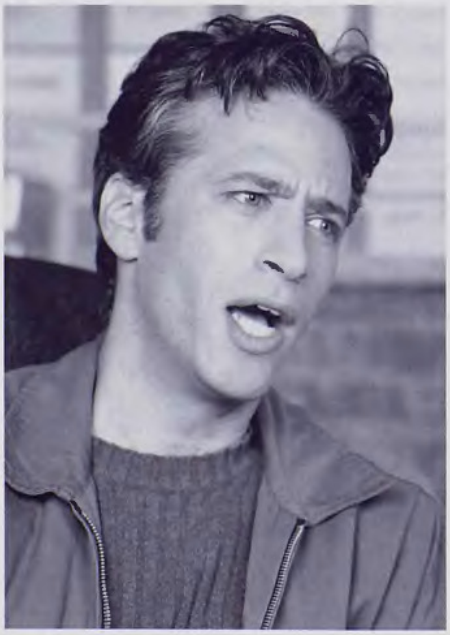
Stewart is a bright talent whose lightning-fast prowess with the ad-lib and wisecrack is savant-like. Since taking over The Daily Show from Craig Kilborn, he's seen the show's ratings improve (while Kilborn, who took over the Snyder show, seems badly miscast in his new role). Critics have raved about Stewart's self-effacing charm and smartass sensibility. That sensibility has been the secret to Stewart's success dating back to his days as talk show host on MTV. He doesn't try to be hip in the slightest, and yet he comes across as the hippest comic on television. It's no wonder that one critic called The Daily Show "the smartest thing on the air."

Jonathan Stewart Liebowitz, 37, grew up in the Trenton, New Jersey suburb of Lawrenceville, where he lived with his father, Donald, a physicist for RCA, and his mother, Marian, an educational consultant. The couple divorced in 1971, but otherwise Stewart's wonder years were typical for a young Jewish boy. He wondered: Would he "grow taller, get better looking, get laid"? Meanwhile, Stewart took refuge in Mad magazine, The National Lampoon and the defensive use of comedy to short-circuit any comments about his height, looks or religion.

At the College of William and Mary he got the answers to his questions (yes, yes and yes) and graduated with a B.S. in psychology, which he promptly put to use working as a bartender. His best drink: "A Whack in the Head—a mixture of Alabama Slammer and Long Island Iced Tea. Drink two and you're not getting up the stairs."

Stewart also worked for the state of New Jersey in various civic capacities and eased into a comfortable middle-class lifestyle that left him uncomfortable.

In 1987 he decided to pack his bag for New York City and test his secret ambition to



"Some of us are optimists, some are pessimists. Some see the glass half full, some see the glass half empty. And some are sitting on shards of glass and trying to pick them out of their ass."

"There comes a point in your life where you go, 'I guess I'm not going to be six feet tall—and I can't believe how important that used to be to me.' I'm fine. If I can't reach a glass, I can just stand on a chair."

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVID ROSE

"Comedians are incredibly cynical, and the last thing they're doing is enhancing the human spirit. There's no Mother Teresa of comedy. There are no development deals for martyrs. We're out there getting our swerve on."

do stand-up. His coming-of-age at the famed Bitter End was less than auspicious, but it still made him feel "better than anything else" he'd done. Even when another club owner told him that there were already too many Jewish comedians, Stewart didn't retreat to suburbia. He got a job hosting Short Attention Span Theater on Comedy Central in 1991. In 1993 he tried out with every other comedian to succeed Letterman on Late Night; Conan O'Brien got the job. Eventually, Stewart appeared on an HBO Young Comedians Special, then did the Late Show With David Letterman. That shot got MTV interested and he signed on to host the half-hour Jon Stewart Show, which debuted in September 1993. Paramount expanded the format to an hour and syndicated the show. Soon it was being replaced by Roseanne reruns, shifted to the 3:30 A.M. slot and was canceled in June 1995.

During the next few years Stewart turned up in unexpected places, including The Larry Sanders Show, where he often appeared as himself and was a creative consultant. He also launched a movie career (Half Baked, Playing by Heart, The Faculty, Big Daddy), hatched a production deal with Miramax Films and wrote a humor book titled Naked Pictures of Famous People. Rather than rely on the stand-up material he'd already mined in his 1996 HBO Comedy special, Jon Stewart: Unleavened, Stewart wrote essays skewering the conceits of popular culture. It was an immediate New York Times best-seller.

In January 1999, Stewart replaced the host of The Daily Show and hasn't looked back. "I'm very happy now," he says. Even if it doesn't get any better than The Daily Show? Yes, Stewart insists. "Let's just say that if it never gets any worse than this, then I've had one of the luckiest runs ever."

We asked Contributing Editor **David Rensin,** *who last interviewed David Spade for us, to spend a few days with Stewart on the set of The Daily Show. Rensin reports:*

"His office is littered with the detritus of celebrity: unopened champagne bottles, promo items, gift baskets and a biohazard container left by 'a guy who did flu shots. I wanted something to remember him by.' Jon's mind is similarly littered, but with the raw material of comedy-to-order. He could send up any topic instantly, especially when he detected an intentional (or unintentional) setup in my questions.

"For our second meeting, he asked if we could talk during the sixth New York Mets–Atlanta Braves playoff game. We ordered in pizza and Cokes. 'This is going to be the best 12-year-old's pizza party you've ever had in your life,' Jon said. It was touch-and-go the whole game, and we would have watched the entire thing, but Jon kept calling his girlfriend to rave every time the Mets scored. Eventually he decided to catch the last few innings with her, and we said goodnight.

"The Mets lost, so I wanted to begin our next conversation on a cheery note."

PLAYBOY: Congratulations.

STEWART: Thanks. [*Pauses*] For what?

PLAYBOY: Isn't *The Daily Show* the longest you've ever held a job?

STEWART: That's true. I started January 11, 1999. How did you know?

PLAYBOY: This is PLAYBOY. We know everything.

STEWART: We'll see.

PLAYBOY: Tell us about the time you destroyed thousands of dollars' worth of aquariums in what can loosely be described as a gymnastics accident.

STEWART: You *do* know [*smiles*]. First, the tanks were empty. No fish were harmed in that senseless tragedy. It was 1976 or 1977. My brother was an assistant manager at one of the first mega Woolworths. He was a bit of a taskmaster, but good people. The main floor was filled with entertaining and wonderful items. I worked downstairs in the catacombs, with the stock shelves. To alleviate some of the boredom, we used to dive off the shelves. They were pretty high, but it was OK because this was back in the day of the beanbag chair. We'd pile them up and do whatever gymnastics routine we could imagine. Unfortunately, I hit a bag wrong and it shot across the room and wiped out thousands of dollars' worth of aquariums. Fortunately, I had the key to the incinerator. But, much to my chagrin, aquariums make a lot of noise when they burn. It drew the attention of some higher-ups and my brother had to fire me.

At least they didn't roll the end credits on Bambi's dead mother: Bambi's an orphan, the fire is burning, see ya.

PLAYBOY: Too bad. You probably would have made manager by now.

STEWART: A major disappointment. But I sought professional help, improved my diving technique and haven't hit the bag wrong in years. I know it's one reason I've lasted so long with *The Daily Show*.

PLAYBOY: Describe *The Daily Show* to someone who's never seen it.

STEWART: It's a pulsating hour of drama. Actually, if someone's never seen it, chances are I won't be talking to them; I force people to watch a highlight reel before each and every introduction.

PLAYBOY: And then you walk into the room?

STEWART: Exactly. Then I say: "Do you watch the news? Do you think it's funny? We do, too." That's pretty much it.

PLAYBOY: What specifically is funny to you about the news?

STEWART: Not the news itself but how the news is delivered. The process of news. The parody is our bombastic graphics and the news song, the correspondents and their interaction with me. And by using the general structure of a news show, which we find inherently satirical, we've found a cheap way to get in 20 monolog-type jokes. Does that make any sense? [*Pauses*] Judges? Too bad: The East German says no.

PLAYBOY: Perhaps an example would help.

STEWART: Last night we had a bumper graphic that parodied how news programs tease viewers into watching the whole show: "10:11: Hero dog saves family. 10:13: Rapist on loose. 10:15: Do you know what's in ice cream? It could kill you. 10:17: Sports." Or look at the pomposity of *Dateline*: the grandiose set, the guy sitting in his chair, then getting up and the camera moving in that slow, sweeping way, as the host asks, "Would he escape from the ocean after eight days of drinking his own urine? When we return, the answer." Some news magazines will report on a murder trial while a ticker at the bottom of the screen counts people's phone-in votes for which side they think is right. "When we come back, the defense will present some evidence you won't believe!" It's gotten ridiculous. So we make fun of it.

PLAYBOY: On *The Daily Show* your interviews are only four minutes long. How do you prepare?

STEWART: Is it that clear that I don't? It's pretty standard stuff. Hank books the guests, does a preinterview, then comes in with a dossier and we put up their picture. We do this in a secret basement room. We talk about their physical characteristics, their emotional characteristics. Has there been a breakdown? Drug allergies? Any notes from a doctor. Mental pressure points. Did you ever see Slim Goodbody? He wears a suit with the human organs on the outside for all to see. We usually go over that for each potential guest to see if we can find any weak areas. Once we come up with a game plan, Hank sends it out by code. I can't tell you much more because I'm already telling secrets.

PLAYBOY: In other words, you don't prepare at all.

STEWART: Hey, wait a minute! My goal is to be relatively spontaneous. The interview is really just a little something extra to throw into the show. It doesn't even have an angle, like when Kilborn did Five Questions. We just want it to be light and entertaining. We want to put our guests at ease. The key is to get them to go far enough to give the appearance of a heightened conversation that's not purely on the seller–buyer level. It's an easy gig. If it ran five minutes, I'd be concerned.

PLAYBOY: Have you ever taken on a guest over a disagreement with him?

STEWART: Not that I can recall, though

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that would be interesting. I've seen Chris Rock eviscerate people with common sense and wit while they sit there looking flummoxed. His interview with Representative J.C. Watts was one of the best I've seen. The Johnnie Cochran thing, too. We'd like to branch out into the political arena, but it's really hard to get anybody with a stake in politics to come on a network called Comedy Central. It's a fear of disgrace or embarrassment or humiliation. They know the rules of *Face the Nation* and *Meet the Press*, but nothing here is controlled.

PLAYBOY: Michael J. Fox was your first guest. Who would you like for your last guest?

STEWART: A 70-year-old Michael J. Fox.

PLAYBOY: Why is *The Daily Show* advertised as "the most important show ever"?

STEWART: It's a haven, an oasis of serenity and sanity. It's a new Statue of Liberty. It's a bully pulpit. We have an enormous effect on the population. The power is incredible. I hadn't planned to say anything about it, but we did a story about a peace accord in Kosovo, and the next day it happened. Coincidence? I don't think so. I liken myself to Oprah. When I plug a book, it flies off the shelves. Where would *Tuesdays With Morrie* have been were it not for our recommendation? Where would Stephen King be today? We saved his career.

PLAYBOY: Speaking of careers, though the press and public love you on *The Daily Show*, Jon Voight, when he was a guest, ribbed you good-naturedly about aiming higher. Did that bother you?

STEWART: No. I'm paid more money than I should be to come in, read the newspapers, write a bunch of jokes and work with an unbelievably talented group of people who make me laugh. It's better than being on a sitcom, where the show can be a big hit but your character has a terrible story line and nobody likes you.

PLAYBOY: Like Jeff Conaway on *Taxi*?

STEWART: Right. Everybody else goes off to these monster careers, but he ends up on *Babylon Five*. The last time I saw Jeff I was on the road, flipping channels in a hotel room. He and two strippers were learning how to do something in one of those flicks you pray for when it's late at night and the only thing on HBO is an old fight. It was some crazy titty movie. No dishonor in that, though.

PLAYBOY: In a recent *New York Times* story, Madeleine Smithberg, who helped create and runs your show, said that since Craig Kilborn left, the show "has lost the crystal-clear joke that it's a parody of the news." It wasn't a complaint, but what did she mean?

STEWART: They'd brought in an audience while Craig was there. An audience means you've given in to the fact that it is also a comedy show. When I came aboard I pushed that a little further. I don't say outright that we're doing jokes, but I ad-lib in a way that lets people at

home know we're enjoying ourselves.

PLAYBOY: You seem more conspiratorial than Kilborn.

STEWART: That's my philosophy of television. If you're going to watch me, I might as well let you know I know you're watching. I don't think of this show as elitist.

PLAYBOY: Is TV bad for us?

STEWART: Here's what's really crazy: Everybody complains how the media are responsible for this or irresponsible about that. So the media hold forums to interview *the media* to find out what the problem is. I can't tell you how many times I've been asked on those shows, "Now you [comedians] push the limit and often offend people. How do you defend that?" Here's what I think of when somebody has the nerve to ask me what it's like to step over the line with a joke: What about a news program that shows a guy whose wife just got blown up in an accident? Right away they've got a camera at his house, in his face, and the correspondent asks, "How does it feel?" Then they show you the body. What answer will we get that's not some variation of "shitty"? What right do we have to know how that guy feels after losing his wife? There are times when I think, Man, this news guy would do a report from inside an open wound if he could.

PLAYBOY: They call it the public's right to know.

STEWART: That's true. But it's really the news functioning as entertainment. It shouldn't, but it does, because what the media really want—or need—is to create conflict. The hell with being informative; conflict is entertaining. If you scare people, if you use their fear against them, you can win. "Is your washing machine spreading dangerous bacteria to your children? Is a crazy rapist lurking in your supermarket? Uzi-wielding murderer on a rampage in local neighborhood! Film at 11."

PLAYBOY: Can the media reverse course or are we stuck with this national soap opera?

STEWART: I hope it's cyclical, but once you break through certain barriers, it's hard to reel that back in. The problem is the competitive nature of news. There's too much fear of being scooped. The news has always had a detrimental effect—Hearst did it during the Spanish–American War—but the march of technology has made it ubiquitous. And has exposed it. I remember after Columbine there was a press release about the network that claimed to have broken the story—as though how fast it broke was what really mattered. Fortunately, the network evening news isn't as slash-and-burn as what you see on a local level. The real disaster is the all-news channels. They have to fill 24 hours. They have enormous machines; tragedy and sensationalized material are their life raft. Without them, most of the time, they would drown in 24 hours of nothing. So: O.J., Menendez, Lewinsky, Columbine, JFK Jr., etc. They milk it.

PLAYBOY: Aren't they just trying to attract viewers?

STEWART: Yes. If TV thought that showing a naked girl jiggling car keys would do it—and they could get away with it—you'd see it tonight. TV news today subverts how I think news organizations should behave. Reporting news is a huge responsibility. It has to be taken more seriously. Bobcat Goldthwait had a great joke about the guy who videotaped the Rodney King beating. His joke was: "Put down the camera and help him!" He's right. News isn't a Discovery Channel documentary where you're not supposed to feed the apes because that would be messing with the journalistic credibility of your documentary. It's real life. News shows do, at times, affect the real news with their coverage.

An obvious example is when Bill Clinton, in his first hundred days, tried to do health care reform, among other things. But all we heard about was gays in the military. Was that his flagship issue? Did he say, "Health care reform? That can wait, as long as I get through my agenda of making sure that gay people are allowed into the military." No, but that's how it came out because *that* was the most inflammatory story and the most conflict would come from it.

Same with the penis thing, the Lewinsky story. I still don't understand where the abuse of power was. You mean because he's an older guy and he's kind of her boss and she blew him? Like *that* abuse of power? Is that an abuse of the Constitution? Did he invoke some obscure article to get a blow job? The way it was characterized, you would have thought that getting a blow job from an intern was a crime against humanity, that even Adolf Eichmann would have said, "He did *what*? A blow job from an intern? Is he insane? My God. Think of the imbalance between their positions!" And there were the news media, over and over, trotting out the pomp and circumstance of "He lied to the American people." Don't they understand that we have memories? When Clarence Thomas was accused of sexual harassment, we could see that Republicans went out of their way to talk about how it wasn't important and how Democrats went out of their way to talk about the crucial nature of proving these claims: How could *any* man serve on the Supreme Court when he had mentioned pubic hair and Coke? Pubic hair and Coke? He's a judge! Judges aren't human! Then, a few years later, it switches around. Democrats are defending sexual harassment and Republicans are talking about the moral imperative of treating women as equals. Don't these people—news media and politicians alike—know that we sit home, watch this and go, "You only have situational ethics. You have no credibility with us."

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PLAYBOY: So politicians are complicit in this?

STEWART: I think politicians look at these incidents with glee. They don't go, "Oh, I can help rid the country of perjury, lying and sexual misconduct." They think, I can use this to give my party an advantage.

PLAYBOY: What a surprise.

STEWART: Our elected officials hold themselves above the people and what's best. I don't believe for a second that Henry Hyde was appalled by Clinton's behavior. I don't believe Bob Barr was appalled by the conduct. Newt Gingrich? Newt Gingrich was fucking a woman-not-his-wife while he was attacking the president for Lewinsky. It doesn't get any clearer than that. These guys are all just acting. You know that after Congress let out for the night they all went for a beer at some bar on the Potomac and giggled their fucking heads off. They're all in cahoots to keep their privileged places. Yet they and the media said, "Of course the American people care. Look at how the ratings go up." Big surprise: They were talking about the president's *dick*. Who's not going to watch that? "Hmm. Should I watch a rerun of *The Nanny* or a guy on TV talking about the president's dick and a cigar in a girl's vagina?"

PLAYBOY: For a guy the press has called "the Stravinsky of self-deprecation," you're pretty outspoken in print.

STEWART: It's how I feel [*sighs, exhausted*]. I also think I have to be outrageous here because I'm competing with naked women.

PLAYBOY: Seriously?

STEWART: Yeah. I'm not sure how long I can keep the readers from looking at the girl with no pants on, sitting on a llama. At some point you have to say something incredibly inflammatory, like "I fuck raccoons." Take Jesse Ventura's interview. It was tremendous. That was the key. I'm going for that little box with the bold print.

PLAYBOY: So what do you want as your quote?

STEWART: How about: "Please, please, just hang in there. Keep reading. You're only four pages away." I don't mind begging. "You can't masturbate forever. Everybody has to rest sometime. Don't hate yourself. We all do it. Just thank God you didn't flip to this page right before you came." You never want that image in your head: someone flipping the pages and seeing your picture at just that magic moment. That happened to me once with Gilbert Gottfried. Just as I was about to finish, I flipped the page and saw his face. It was like, "Oh boy, I got to work with this guy."

PLAYBOY: Does it bother you that, unlike Chris Rock or Dennis Miller, your voice is not the dominant sensibility of *The Daily Show*?

STEWART: My job is not to tell you what I

think. My job is to tell you what I think is funny—which they do, too, by the way. If it's not funny it's not anything. Our show had its sensibility before I got here. But I also know that when I'm out there saying stuff on the air, I'd better be OK with it, so the editorial viewpoint is influenced by me. I like the balance. If the show's smart and funny, whether I have anything to do with it or not every night, I win.

PLAYBOY: Any advice from former host Craig Kilborn when you appeared as a guest during his final week?

STEWART: Not really. I congratulated him and tried to find out if I could use the bathroom. That sort of thing.

PLAYBOY: The feeling was that you, not Kilborn, would succeed Tom Snyder on *The Late Late Show* because you were under contract to the producers, David Letterman's company, Worldwide Pants. Instead, you replaced the guy who got the Snyder gig. What happened?

STEWART: My deal with Worldwide Pants was like a Vegas marriage. They were drunk, I was drunk. It seemed like a good idea at the time. Getting together was just an impulse thing. We both woke up the next morning, mouths a little dry, feeling a little cottony, eyes a little bloodshot. We looked at each other and went, "Man, you sure looked better last night when I was drunk." But not in a bad way. That's just how shit happens sometimes in this business.

PLAYBOY: Were you disappointed?

STEWART: No. I wasn't ready and Worldwide Pants wasn't ready. I don't think it was a priority for them to develop a show for me, which, originally, was talked about as for 1:30 in the morning. The whole thing was serendipity. I did a spot on Letterman's show; at the same time, I'd been offered the gig hosting NBC's *Later*, which Bob Costas and Greg Kinnear did. Letterman's people knew about it and said, "Hey, what would you think about . . . ?" I said, "You know, I'm sort of into this thing over at NBC." I think their reaction was, "Well, we don't want *them* to fuck this girl. We'd rather fuck her."

PLAYBOY: So you were seduced.

STEWART: I've got major admiration for Dave Letterman. To hear from him that he would somehow like to have his name associated with mine, in however peripheral a manner, was powerful candy. My sit-down with him was like an audience with the Pope. So even though a contract was signed and money exchanged hands, we committed without really committing. Thank God, because it never would have worked. A show of that magnitude, five nights a week, becomes your life. I've done it before, and not that successfully, even though I thought we did a nice job of it.

PLAYBOY: Were you concerned that doing *The Late Late Show* might look like failed-talk-show-host-can't-give-up?

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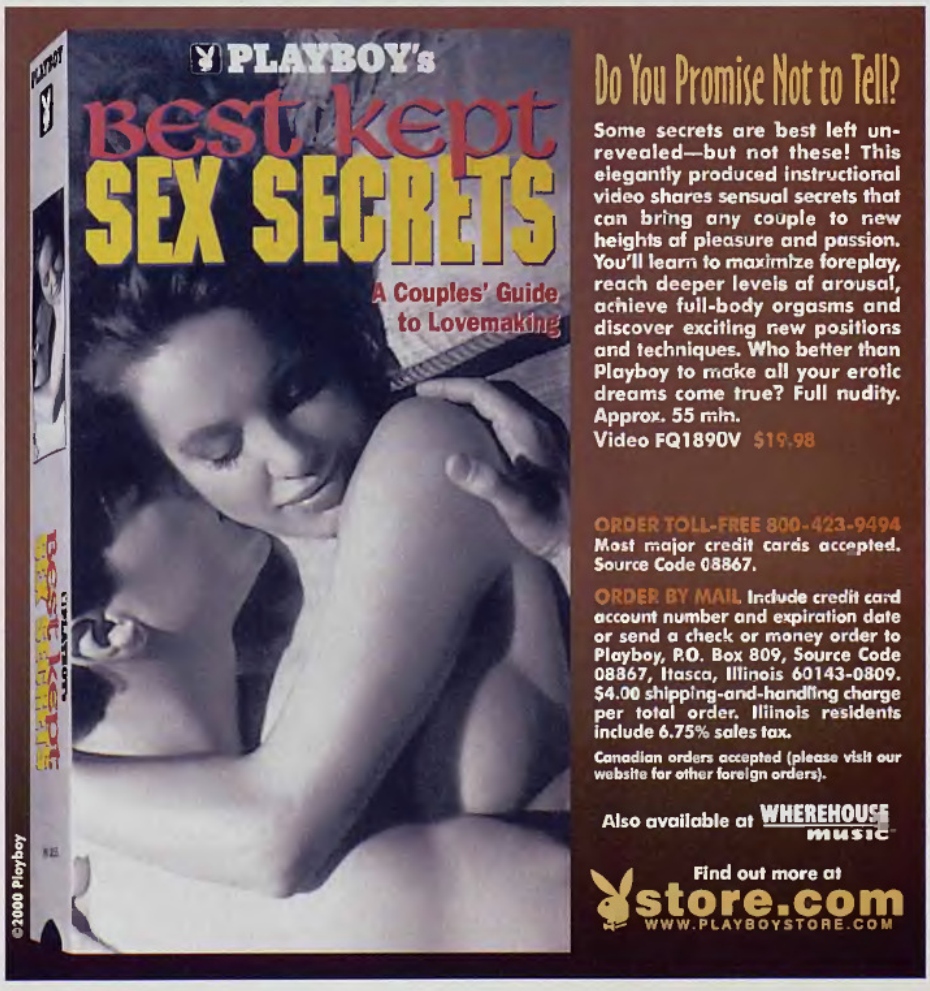
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STEWART: No. It's not as if I had a dart board at home with my face next to Pat Sajak's and Rick Dees'.

PLAYBOY: What's the difference between Letterman on-screen and off-screen?

STEWART: On-screen is a performance. His interviews are like a sketch. He plays like he's actually interested in what I did for Thanksgiving and I play like something funny actually happened. Off camera, he's incredibly human. There is no game, no act. He was a very smart, funny man talking to me about his vision for late-night and his interest in me. I was impressed.

PLAYBOY: Did Letterman ever say that Snyder would soon retire, or that he wanted him to?

STEWART: That was never explicit.

PLAYBOY: Did you and Snyder ever talk about this when you guest-hosted *The Late Late Show*?

STEWART: We had one sort-of conversation in which I said, "Hey, I just want you to know I have the utmost respect."

PLAYBOY: Give us the short course on the fine art of sitting in.

STEWART: If there's a drawer that is locked, don't jimmy it with a butter knife. They'll know. Also, you can only pull that fill-up-the-vodka-bottle-with-water gag once.

PLAYBOY: You also tried out for the job that Conan O'Brien got.

STEWART: It was pre-MTV. I had no experience outside a couple of writing gigs and doing shows above the karaoke bar. I lived on the road, staying in comedy condos that had huge holes in the walls because the last comic there didn't have as pleasant a time as he'd expected. I tried out because the juxtaposition of my life with the idea of maybe replacing David Letterman on *Late Night* was so great I almost couldn't get my head around it. I thought of it as a lifeline. And the weird thing is that I got far enough in the auditions to believe for a second that I might get it. The audition was in a stand-up club. We each did ten minutes. Among the "contestants" were Allan Havey, Drew Carey, Paul Provenza. It was like being in the Miss America finals. I knew I wasn't going to get it when, after two minutes, Lorne Michaels—who produces the show—stood up and said, "No!" That's when I thought, Oh, I should have turned the mike to "funny."

PLAYBOY: Do you now feel like you've had the last laugh?

STEWART: Not really. On the other hand, the prophecy I'd created for myself—one room without a bathroom, miserable old guy who will never love or be loved—didn't happen either. Some of us are optimists, some are pessimists. Some see the glass half full, some see the glass half empty. And some are sitting on shards of glass and trying to pick them out of their ass.

PLAYBOY: One magazine writer described you as the "celebrity equivalent of lint: He pops up in interesting and unlikely places." Another example of your waiting in the wings was when you appeared as yourself on the last season of *The Larry Sanders Show*, filling in for Larry. Rumors quickly circulated that you'd actually take over as faux host when Shandling left. Was that ever in the cards?

STEWART: That's the beauty of the show. They drew a bizarre line between fiction and reality. In reality, my becoming the host would be like saying, "Hey, Michelangelo's *David* could really use a mustache and mutton chops." It's like *MASH* and *After MASH*. Are people really interested in what Klinger and Radar are doing in Iowa?

PLAYBOY: How did you get involved with Garry Shandling?

STEWART: I met Garry through the personal ads in *The Advocate*. Or maybe it was through the 4-H circular. I can't remember. But his ad was charming and I thought we had a lot in common. Except his ass is bigger than mine. By the way, I've only eyeballed his ass. I don't know firsthand. You have to draw the line somewhere in a working relationship. Now when we hang out, it's not exactly dating because only light petting is involved.

PLAYBOY: How about the real story?

STEWART: When I hosted my own talk show, Garry did a walk-on for the last three minutes, the night Jeff Tambor played my sidekick. Of course, I knew who he was. I had a TV. I liked *It's Garry Shandling's Show* and his stand-up. I'd been aware of him for many years, from afar. The beauty of Garry is, when you think the joke is over, it's not over. Most of us run out of steam on punch lines. You get to that point where you've tagged your last tag and there's nowhere else to go. That's when Garry comes up with five more tags. I can't quite figure out how he does it; I just think his brain is wired more efficiently.

PLAYBOY: You're known for being lightning quick and dead-on yourself. Did you two ever trade professional secrets?

STEWART: No. I've spoken to some of his representatives and they have agreed with me, but I've never spoken to Garry directly. He was kept in a plastic bubble when we worked together.

PLAYBOY: Can comedians really be friends with other comedians? What's the rule?

STEWART: They have it up in the bathroom at the Improv, but I can't remember it. No, no, that's "Wash your hands before you leave." [*Pauses*] Most people have this impression that among comedians it's like *Diner*, a bunch of guys doing shtick over French fries; or that all we do is analyze comedy; or that we're all neurotic and crazy. Well, maybe that last bit is true. But some of the best conversations I've had with other comics at three A.M. sitting in a diner were *not* about comedy.

PLAYBOY: Are you the kind of guy you imagined becomes a comedian?

STEWART: Preconceived notions are invalid. With accountants the big gag is that they're boring. But I'm sure there's a hang-gliding accountant out there who knows how to play the drums and fucks like a champ. I'm sure there's an accountant somewhere who comes home late at night drunk, sticks his dick in the butter, laughs his ass off and goes, "If they only knew."

PLAYBOY: What's the most important thing to you about comedy?

STEWART: Nothing. It's silly. You want something important? Learn to take a guy's heart out of his chest, restart it and put it back in.

PLAYBOY: Isn't humor also curative? A way of enhancing the human spirit?

STEWART: Oh boy. Most comedians are incredibly cynical, and the last thing they're doing is enhancing the human spirit. [*Pauses*] Most are feeding their own gratuity machine, ingesting something they need and popping it out on the other side. If it happens to have a positive effect on people, that's great. But I believe very few comedians got into it because the children need to laugh. They do it to feed something in themselves. Somewhere in their brains a neuron fires happily and a need is eased, like a drug. It's almost self-medication.

PLAYBOY: Even so, the public gets something out of it.

STEWART: Yeah, but there's no Mother Teresa of comedy saying, "I'm going to go to Calcutta and live there for years in poverty and entertain the children." There are no development deals for martyrs. We're out there getting our swerve on.

PLAYBOY: Why did you want to become a comedian?

STEWART: Like most of the comedians I know, I was uncomfortable in other settings. Before I found comedy, nothing fit my receptors. But this felt right. As bad as I was when I started, it still felt better than anything else I'd ever done. It soothed a need, and that was good enough for me.

PLAYBOY: You did kids' puppet shows before stand-up; why didn't that feed the need?

STEWART: This is actually a great example that illustrates my point. Kids on the Block was a performance program in which half the puppets were disabled and half the puppets weren't. They interacted in a way that helped children understand people with disabilities and how to interact with them. It was a truly good and decent thing to do for people; an enlightened, wonderful performance. Yet I thought to myself, Fuck this. I need stand-up.

PLAYBOY: Like Larry Sanders, you wrote a book. But instead of an autobiography, yours has comic essays in which you take

YOU'VE BEEN FRIENDS SINCE GETTING TOGETHER FOR A DRINK MEANT THE WATER FOUNTAIN AFTER RECESS.

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on Bill Gates, Hitler, the Kennedys, Hanson, Leonardo DaVinci, chat rooms, Judaism, sitcoms, local news and more. What did you leave out?

STEWART: [*Laughs*] There was one piece called *Les Marlboros*. It was a parody of *Les Miserables* where the revolution was smokers versus nonsmokers. It actually included Jean Valjean, who didn't understand the whole thing, but he was French and he liked to smoke, so he decided to lead the band of rebels. It was long and boring.

PLAYBOY: What can't you wait to write about in the next book?

STEWART: As far as I can tell, in this country we can't keep a secret about anything. We even found out that Dick Morris was sucking the toes of a prostitute. So how come the guys protecting the truth about whether or not we've been visited by extraterrestrials have their shit together? I would love to figure out a way to write about the sciences. Cloning: We just hit 6 billion people and we're still working on a new way to make new people? It's fascinating that, with all the world's problems, scientists decided to make hard-on pills. I might write about how to make Viagra palatable. It could come in a gelatinous form, like Jell-O cubes, because we need to make it fun for kids, too! And I guess if you're 80, Jell-O is just easier to swallow. Pretty soon it'll be a Viagra patch. Or it'll be a pull cord somehow. It's this crazy idea that if we somehow keep old people fucking, everything's going to work itself out. It boggles my mind that that's where the money goes.

Violence is another interesting area, especially with kids who don't realize that everything they're so bummed out about now will turn around. My idea on solving that issue is to take high school kids on field trips. But not to planetariums and museums; take them to 20-year high school reunions. "See the fat guy over there? Bald? Crying in his beer? Captain of the football team." "That nerdy guy with the pocket protector? A billionaire." Giving them a sense of perspective would be good, and maybe we'd even come up with a cool T-shirt to give the kids.

PLAYBOY: Let's investigate your style. Thin ties or wide ties?

STEWART: You mean to wear? I wasn't sure. It's PLAYBOY, so I figured at some point I'm going to have to throw in my sexual proclivities.

PLAYBOY: Better topic. Go ahead.

STEWART: *I fuck cheese!*

PLAYBOY: Anything else?

STEWART: In bed I always apologize. I take responsibility for a job poorly done. I like to end sex with, "I beg your pardon." Sometimes, if I've been doing a film, I'll say, "Check the gate." Or: "Sign this form and you can go. You can take something off craft services on your way out. We'll call you for the premiere."

PLAYBOY: When was the first time you had sex?

STEWART: What time is it? I guess I was 18. I was a freshman in college.

PLAYBOY: When was the first time you had good sex?

STEWART: Boy, I'm not good with dates. You mean sex with love, where there's actually emotion involved, other than fear?

PLAYBOY: Yes. When did fear leave your sexual routine?

STEWART: [*Whispers*] It was Christmas 1984. We hadn't had much snow that year and the potato crop had been good. We huddled around the hearth. [*Pauses*] I think for men the fear is never gone. While he may not be on your shoulder, he's certainly around: "All right, buddy. Don't get any ideas. I'm right here in the hall."

PLAYBOY: What are your turn-ons?

STEWART: People who ask me what my turn-ons are. Also, honesty and long hair.

PLAYBOY: And turn-offs?

STEWART: Short hair and lying. Makes sense, right? You never see: "Turn-on: Honest people. Turn-off: People who tell the truth." There's never that.

PLAYBOY: Tell us the truth: What was it like to kiss Gillian Anderson in *Playing by Heart*?

STEWART: I was upset. I blacked out and woke up with makeup on my face. That's all I remember about it, but I know the truth is out there. It's weird to kiss somebody you don't know in *that* way. It's not natural. I don't think anybody would tell you it's the most comfortable thing in the world.

PLAYBOY: So it was your first time?

STEWART: No, I kissed Jennifer Beals onscreen a few years ago. And I kissed Fran Drescher on *The Nanny*. Luckily, everyone was professional and nice about it. I've never had a situation where I did it and the woman turned to the director and said, "Uh, can we just get the stunt guy in here?"

PLAYBOY: Do you bring the kiss from home or do you act the kiss?

STEWART: I guess it's my personal kiss, but it's not like it's from home because it lacks the huge emotional thing. Also, a lot of what we're doing is impressions of what we think we're supposed to be doing. Remember those old Forties movie kisses? *Those are kisses.* The-war-is-over, we're-in-Times-Square, I'm-wearing-a-uniform, you-look-pretty, I'm-gonna-smack-you-one-right-here, *bang!* kisses. They dip and do the thing.

PLAYBOY: But they don't even open their mouths.

STEWART: Right, but look at how they go for it. *Bang!* The new thing in kissing is the lean-in, the I-have-to-show-you-that-we're-just-coming-to-this. I don't recall that ever happening to me. It's usually far more awkward than that, and afterward you have to talk about it for six hours. In some ways we're doing an impression of what a Hollywood make-out scene is now. Have you ever watched soft-core movies on Cinemax? They're not having sex, they're doing an impression of what sex is. The girl sits on top and you raise your arms to cover her breasts, depending on if she signed a release about her nipples. It's fake sex. It's the impression of sex as we have come to know it through movies. It's sort of like comedians who do an impression of Jack Nicholson. It's actually an impression of a comic you saw doing a Jack Nicholson impression.

PLAYBOY: Which films moved you as a child?

STEWART: I can tell you the first two films I ever saw: *Ring of Bright Water* and *Yellow Submarine*. It was a back-to-back drive-in thing.

PLAYBOY: Did they influence your career?

STEWART: Well, it was a long time before I realized that the world wasn't animated. *Ring of Bright Water* is the most amazing movie. It was back in the old days when animal movies were supposed to end horribly. Now they have the kid weeping as he looks up to see the dog limping on three legs after traveling 2000 miles by train, with a smelly hobo, to come home. This movie is about a kid who had an otter. The otter helped the kid out of a tough jam and he and the otter were tight. So you think everything is OK; the kid's life is going to be good. Instead, he's walking along with his otter, moseying down this country road, when a farmer comes up and, in a split second, decapitates the otter with a shovel. Then the movie ends. It is the most bizarre thing I've ever seen. And the kid just looks at him like, What the fuck? It's sick. It's sadistic. I loved otters. [*Pauses*] Imagine a Disney movie today that got away with an ending like that. Mighty Joe Young shot through the head. At least they didn't roll the end credits on Bambi's dead mother: Bambi's an orphan, the fire is burning, see ya.

PLAYBOY: Let's break your life and career into *The Daily Show* segments. What are the headlines?

STEWART: STEWART'S ACNE CLEARS UP JUST AS BACK HAIR APPEARS: WILL HE EVER WIN? STEWART SCORES SEAT AT NEW JERSEY BAR, GIVEN TENURE: WILL HE ACCEPT IT? STEWART HITS THE BITTER END, ROBIN WILLIAMS NOT SHAKING IN BOOTS.

PLAYBOY: Your first gig was there.

STEWART: I chose the Bitter End because of its vaunted history of comedic performances; also it was within walking distance. I thought of Woody Allen in front of the brick wall, spinning yarns, and Cosby and Richard Pryor. Then I remembered that that was 20 years earlier. It had become Doors cover bands. I went onstage and after only two minutes received my first "You're an asshole!"

PLAYBOY: Your reply?

(continued on page 149)

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Monkey Forest Road

a witch doctor down
by the river, dancing
among the snakes—
this is not a good sign

fiction By Tom Paine

We had stumbled out of a monsoon into the Rangoon bar earlier that evening. Most of us were American and British engineers, consultants to the Aussies, who were opening a nickel mine on the Tessarim Coast; a couple of the French were with the Libyans, who were mining uranium up in Chauk. The old Canadian guy was already sitting at the end of the bar when we showed up, and at first only let on he was here in Myanmar building a hotel on Letsok-Aw, an island down the Mergui Archipelago.

The story he told us that night was about a hotel project he had worked on a few years back in Ubud, Bali. I had been to the beach at Kuta in Bali surfing the pipes in my wandering 20s, and had driven north in a bemo for a day at Ubud. It was north of the airport at Denpasar, in the layered emerald rice fields beneath the sacred mountains of Batur and Agung. At first all I remembered about Ubud was that Hindu priests had fled there 1000 years ago when the rest of Indonesia was overrun by Islam, and that Ubud was still virginal, in comparison to the southern peninsula of Bali, which in 15 years had evolved into a Buddhist Fort Lauderdale.

The Canadian, who said his name was Sherm Strickhauser, went to Ubud to build a hotel for the Crown Royal Hotels chain out of Singapore. He proudly rattled off some of the places he'd built hotels for Crown Royal over the past 30 years: *Belize, Madagascar, Tobago, Thailand, Irian Jaya*. . . . The list went on and on. Sherm kept repeating how he and his best friend Andrew Rouse had always kept their Crown Royal hotel projects "ahead of schedule and under budget." He pounded the bar a lot with his fist and said the two of them "always ran a tight ship."

PAINTING BY MARSHALL ARISMAN

Besides being his best friend, Andrew Rouse was also Sherm's boss. For 20 years Andrew and Sherm had been an international Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble while their wives Wilma and Betty hung out together in Toronto until the boys winged back from pouring concrete all over the globe. But just before the Bali project, Andrew Rouse had fallen for a Danish airline stewardess 25 years younger. Sherm thought it was just a bloody fling that had ended after their last project, but then Andrew disappeared from Toronto for a week and showed up in Bali with the stewardess Victoria Erickson literally on his back. This woman in the white tank top was riding piggyback on Andrew as they came out of customs in Denpasar, and Andrew threw an arm over Sherm's shoulder and led him toward a bemo for the bumpy ride up to Ubud.

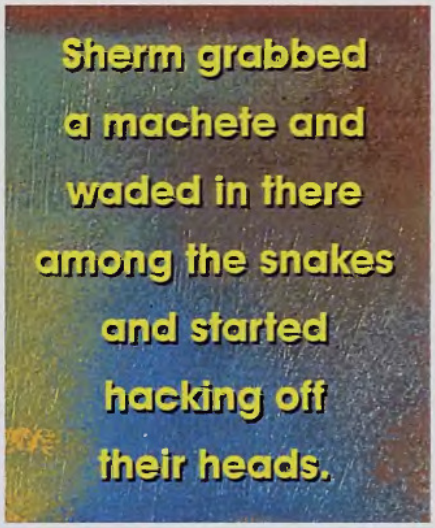
Victoria sat in Andrew's lap all the way to Ubud. Sometimes she'd stick her pinkie in his mouth and he'd pretend to bite it. As they bumped over the potholes Victoria showed Sherm she had no fingernails on her pinkies. Victoria also told Sherm about how she and Andrew had just spent an incredible week helicopter skiing in the Canadian Rockies. When they got to Ubud at sunset, the two jumped out of the bemo and ran into the jungle like a couple of kids. Sherm stood on the road above and watched them laughing their way down to the golden river far below. There were monkeys chattering like lunatics in the trees over his head. Andrew and Victoria took off their clothes and lay down in the shallow river. Then Andrew stood up naked as a jaybird in the river and while pointing to his nose yelled up to his old friend Sherm, "Smell the perfume? The air here is perfume!"

At this point in his story, Sherm looked around at all of us engineers in the Rangoon bar and sniffed the air with disgust.

Sherm shook his head and ordered another Malang beer from the toothless bartender. And then at my prompting he went on with his story about his old best friend Andrew Rouse, the Danish stewardess Victoria Erickson and the construction of the Crown Royal Hotel in Ubud.

The original plan was to put up the hotel and 20 villas on Monkey Forest Road. Everyone who has been to Ubud has walked down Monkey Forest Road. I was mildly surprised to hear that they were building a hotel there—it was some of the only jungle land left around Ubud. Every other inch around Ubud was elegantly terraced emerald rice paddies for at least the last 1000 years. There's another thing I remembered about Bali as Sherm told his story—how every single drop of water from the mountains was channeled down the hillsides from rice paddy to rice paddy. The whole crazily elaborate Balinese culture was organized around worshiping this sacred water from the mountains.

But back to his story: Andrew and Victoria and Sherm and the other members of the Crown Royal construction management team rented a row of rooms at Poppie's Guest House while they hired hundreds of Balinese and began to order construction supplies from Djakarta and Melbourne. I should say Sherm did the hiring of the Balinese workers and the ordering of building supplies, because according to Sherm, Andrew and Victoria spent



their days wandering around the rice paddies of Ubud as if stoned out of their heads. Although Sherm didn't agree and got pissed off when I suggested it, from what I remembered, Ubud *was* one remaining place on the globe where the culture and landscape could still alter your sense of reality—it was a certified Shangri-la.

So anyway, one day the bulldozers arrived up from Denpasar on flatbeds, and early the next morning the workers were ready to scrape out the roads and foundation sites on the 40-acre hotel site. Andrew Rouse was nowhere to be found on this day, but it was pretty clear what needed to be done, as by now the jungle was all surveyed and staked out. But then Andrew came roaring up to the site on this 350cc motorcycle with Victoria. He had a major announcement for the construction team. Andrew looked serious, like he was about to lay on them the Ten Commandments, and then took a deep breath and said that he had decided, after a great deal of thought, that the construction management team should wear sarongs "to exhibit their cultural sensitivity."

Rather than start bulldozing that day, Andrew walked the nine incredulous Westerners back up Monkey Forest Road to Ubud, where he supervised the purchase of sarongs. When all the men were fitted out like parrots he walked them to a local Balinese house. The lady of the house led them from room to room, while Victoria explained how the house was set up like the human body. At the entrance or head was a shrine to the ancestors, and the living areas on either side were like the arms, and the kitchen was farther in, and out back was the asshole—the garbage dump. Andrew took them back around to the front of the house and pointed up toward Mount Agung and said the ancestor's temple, or head of the house, always pointed toward the sacred mountain, as this direction was *kelod*, or good, and the asshole of the house pointed toward the sea, as this direction was *kaja*, or evil. Rain came from the mountains, rain gave the people rice and life for thousands of years, thus the mountain and its rain were good.

Andrew and Victoria completed this baffling lesson and then hopped on their motorcycle and took off for a pilgrimage to Mount Agung. The next day after breakfast Andrew came in with the architectural plans and dramatically tore them up in front of the Crown Royal men. He then led the men back to the Monkey Forest Road site and had the men raise their palms and try to "get an intuitive feel" for "the best vibrational zones" for the placement of the villas. He said they were going to start from scratch, build the villas facing in the *kelod* direction. Sherm said the other men went along with this crazy shit because he had made the mistake of asking them to do so as a personal favor to him.

At first, on the next steamy morning, Andrew seemed his old all-business self when he rushed everyone down Monkey Forest Road for a dawn start. But a couple of the guys came late in Western clothes, and Andrew sent them back for their sarongs. So eventually all the men stood in sarongs near the river in a heavy mist listening to the chatter of monkeys when, as if on cue, thousands of brightly colored birds erupted shrieking from the jungle, and then these young Balinese girls came down a path out of the jungle mist and started passing out colored rice cakes. After them came these old Balinese men playing gamelan tinkle-tinkle music, and then some beautiful half-naked women with four-foot-tall towers of fruit on their heads sashayed down, and then two guys carrying roosters

(continued on page 86)

"I'm always up for a good time. I hope you can say the same."

MARDI GRAS 2000

we came, we saw, we partied

It's America's wildest party. Each year thousands of jazzed-up college kids descend on New Orleans' French Quarter for a nonstop bacchanalia of insane parades, cool music and hot women. Mardi Gras, a.k.a. Fat Tuesday, is the raucous culmination of the festive pre-Lenten season, and in the Big Easy, they party so hard they need to ask for divine forgiveness afterward. Not wanting to miss out on all the sinful fun, PLAYBOY rented the balcony of Temptations gentlemen's club in the heart of Bourbon Street and from our lofty headquarters, we threw down specially made Mardi Gras beads while gorgeous PLAYBOY models tantalized the crowds. Naturally, we were constantly on the lookout for other friendly women.

This cat in the hat knows the Mardi Gras mantra. On PLAYBOY's balcony (above, from left): Elizabeth Cox, Katherine Houghton and Christina Serrano. When Amanda Thersher (opposite) flashed us, flashbulbs started popping.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEN NISHINO
REPORTAGE BY GEORGE GEORGIOU AND KEVIN KUSTER

Temptations

Opposite page, clockwise from top: April Oden rose above the fray and became a real crowd-pleaser, Michigander Michelle Conner gathered some moss and future English teacher Kori Adams took a break from her studies. This page, clockwise from above: New Orleans waitress Holly Guidry blossomed like a beautiful magnolia, and flashing became outrageously contagious; some women morphed into complete dickheads and others decided to grab a piece of the action. All the while, PLAYBOY's balcony bash raged above Bourbon Street.

Clockwise from left: Beautiful, blonde Texas student Karina Mitchell got kinged at Mardi Gras World, PLAYBOY beads were the accessory of choice on balconies everywhere, Christina Serrano (left) and Katalina Verdin got cheeky and exotic local bartender Merritt Cabal got a leg up on the situation.

A trio on Bourbon Street (at top, right) aired their differences, leggy Memphis model Catherine Collins blew open our doors (at right) and sexy PLAYBOY models (below, from right) Katalina Verdin, Shannon Leahy, Laurie Walloce and Tiffany Buecher stoked the increasingly attentive crowd of revelers on the street below.

PLAY BOY MARDI GRAS
NEW ORLEANS 1998

I LOVE
BUNNIES
PLEASE
THROW Beads

Opposite page, clockwise from top left: PLAYBOY's Mardi Gras beads, framed here by Katalina Verdin's ample assets, were the most sought-after collectible on Bourbon Street. Midwestern beauty Angela Seibert checked out the infamous House of the Rising Sun, and steamy Texan Roxanne Galla cooled off. When this masked man made a plea to "please throw beads," Christina Serrano answered. This page: Nicole Narian made some beautiful jazz at Mardi Gras World. Want more? Try Playboy's *Girls of Mardi Gras* video.

Monkey Forest Road

(continued from page 76)

in cages of bamboo came running out of the jungle.

Andrew Rouse stepped forward and explained to the men that, according to Balinese custom, before they begin construction of the hotel they had to make a blood sacrifice to the evil spirits. Then this old Balinese guy came out of the woods in a white robe with his hair done up in a little silver knot on top of his head, chanting mantras and sprinkling holy water on the men. The roosters were removed from their cages and pushed together, but they refused to fight. The holy man—called a *pedanda*—looked on, shaking his head as if this was a bad omen. So the gamelan musicians got a big basket and put the roosters in it. Ten seconds later one of the roosters was dead from a sharpened spur to the heart. The *pedanda* muttered some prayers holding the dead rooster up in his hand, and this Balinese kid named Wayan translated the *pedanda*'s prayers from Bahasa Indonesia for Victoria, who explained to the men, "The holy *pedanda*'s prayers are like a ladder inviting the good spirits to descend, and the music and sacred dances of the women and girls are here to welcome the visiting deities."

This is when Sherm finally spoke up and said to Victoria, "We're the visiting deities here, sister."

Sherm was proud of this one-liner, you could see that. He ordered all of us a shot in the bar that night in Rangoon and we drank to the wisdom of this line a few times. He told us how the men of the Crown Royal construction team kept repeating it, describing over and over the look of hatred on Victoria's face when Sherm said to her, *We're the visiting deities here, sister.*

•

The next day when Andrew Rouse again didn't show up to bulldoze the jungle, the men looked to Sherm to give the work order. There were a couple of hundred Balinese workers there too, all looking to Sherm to take command of the troops. But Sherman couldn't bring himself to do it, and took off to find his best friend Andrew Rouse. "If I had any brains left in this old head I would have lowered the boom on Andrew right then," said Sherm.

Sherm found Andrew in the house of the village *pedanda* and took him outside and tried to knock some sense into him. He didn't come down too hard because over 20 years it had always been Andrew who had cut Sherm slack or covered his ass when he screwed up, plus, he didn't see the point in alienating his friend totally over what he still read as a midlife crisis. As Sherm tried to bring him around to at least talking about hotel construction, Andrew kept glancing up at Mount Agung and finally told Sherm he was waiting for the *pedanda* to pick an auspicious day to begin construction. Andrew kept smiling and said how he understood from Victoria that Sherm wasn't totally convinced about his new "low impact" methods (Sherm called them "no-impact" to big laughs that night in Rangoon), and that, although it might seem impossible to believe, he and Victoria had stepped off the plane in Denpasar and had become suddenly drugged by Bali and its landscape, and that on their long walks through the rice paddies had decided that on this construction project they would try to prove that building a hotel does not have to be culturally confrontational or overly destructive.

Sherm had the engineers pounding the bar when he told how he asked his friend Andrew Rouse at this point, *"And it wouldn't be bloody confrontational if a bunch of saronged Balinese showed up at The Queen's Park in Toronto and started bulldozing the place for their resort?"*

As we all laughed at this, Sherman just stared blankly at us. It apparently wasn't funny to him. He leaned forward and said to me while the others around us laughed, "Andrew Rouse was my best friend. All I wanted was for him to get his head out of his bloody ass. So I made the mistake of giving him enough rope to hang himself and kept the Crown Royal management in Singapore in the dark about how this Victoria was messing with his head." Sherm leaned closer and, tapping me on the arm, said, "But it was *me* who had his head up his bloody ass. *I* let my best friend of 20 years down."

What happened next is typical if you have ever worked for an international company in a Third World country. If there is one thing Bali has it is fruit. Guavas, mangoes, pineapples, papayas, bananas, but also horny green durians and belimbing and a dozen other oddities jumping out of the volcanic soil. As for oranges, Bali had three different kinds. But, according to Sherm, Crown Royal Hotels of Singapore insisted on shipping in two dozen Florida orange trees air freight from Indian River. It was like shipping ice to Eskimos.

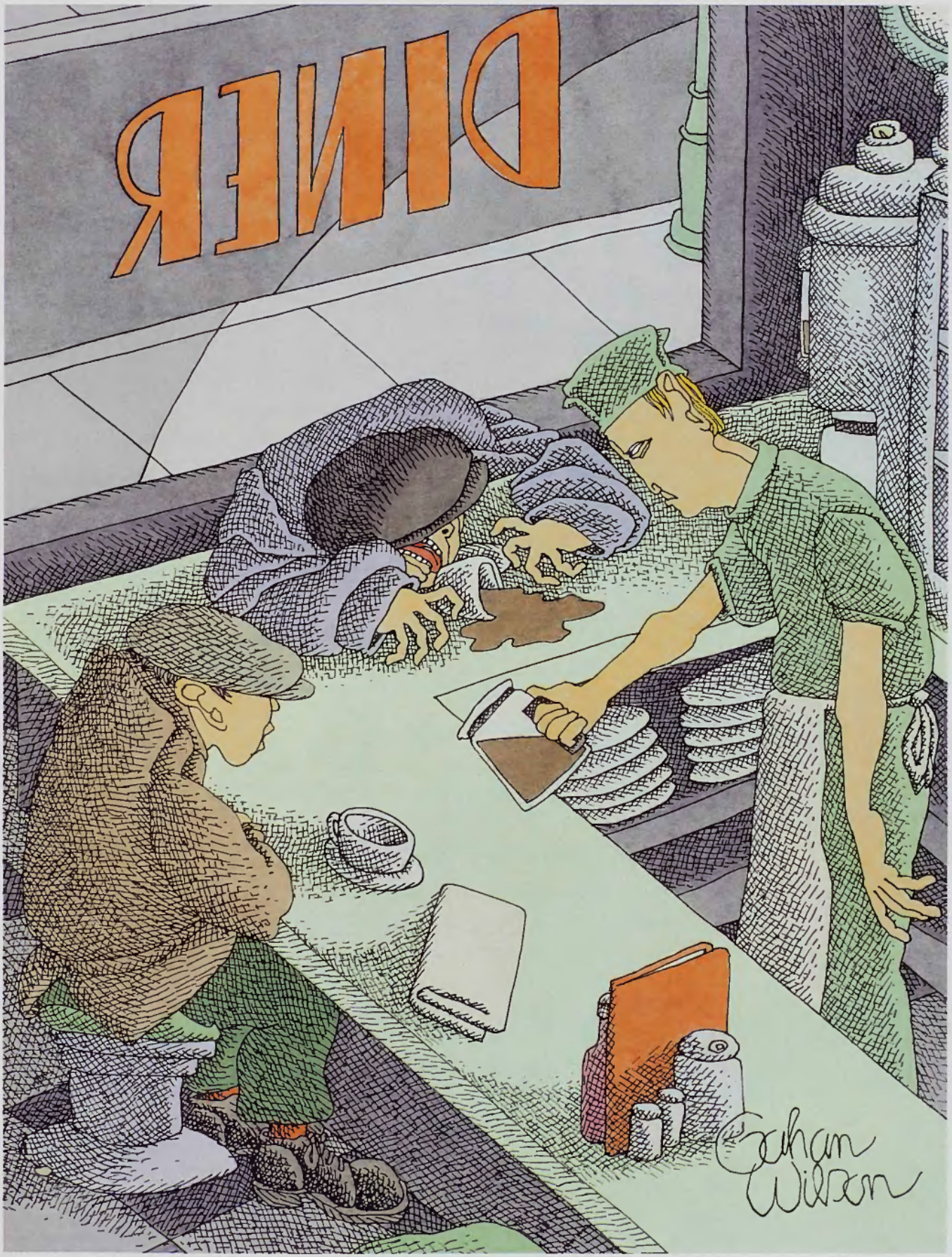
The orange trees showed up about a week later, while Andrew Rouse was still waiting patiently for the village *pedanda* to proclaim an auspicious day to begin construction. As Sherm had been in charge of landscaping on all their previous hotel projects, on the day the trees show up, Sherm grabbed some of the happily snoozing Balinese workers and a backhoe and planted the trees as per the old landscaping plans. The orange trees came with a triple dose of good old American chemical fertilizer, so Sherm doped up the soil around them. For the next week he invented reasons for Crown Royal management in Singapore why construction on the hotel hadn't begun, and then the next week began to submit false reports about how the roads and foundations were in and construction was coming along slowly but steadily. Every day when he saw Andrew he tried to talk some sense into him, but he still didn't come down too hard, because he still thought the right thing to do was cover his friend's ass, and hope when Andrew was tired of screwing Victoria he'd get his head back on straight.

Sherm took to taking a hammock down to the river after faxing his false noon progress report to Singapore. One day he saw Victoria and Andrew running down the riverside. Andrew came charging up to him holding out an orange the size of a softball, and started going on to Sherm how the orange trees from Florida didn't have any fruit when they arrived, but now three weeks later they were giving off these massive oranges. Victoria took the orange from Andrew and waving it in Sherm's face said how this very orange in her very hand was proof of the sacred fertility of the Balinese soil.

Sherm tried to explain to the two of them that the orange trees did have small oranges on them when they arrived from Florida and that he had hopped them up with a fertilizer cocktail powerful enough to propel the trees to the moon, never mind juicing out a couple of oranges. But Andrew and Victoria wouldn't listen to logic, and walked up the riverbank with the orange held before them as if it were the Hope Diamond.

The next day the surprising word came that the *pedanda* had decreed it was a good day to build a hotel. Sherm ran around gathering the remaining Balinese workers, many of whom had headed back to their villages or Denpasar. When Sherm walked down Monkey Forest Road to the construction site, he found Andrew already directing the bulldozers through the jungle. It was then Sherm spotted a half dozen Balinese workers chomping happily on Florida oranges. Andrew noticed at the same moment, and jumped off the bulldozer and ran over with the translator kid Wayan and told the workers in no uncertain terms that *no one* was to eat the oranges from the special Florida trees. Most of the

(continued on page 92)



"I believe I'll pass on the coffee."

LET'S GO RACING

JEFF GORDON

DALE EARNHARDT

EDDIE IRVINE

MICHAEL ANDRETTI

DALE JARRETT

MICHAEL SCHUMACHER

MIKA HAKKINEN

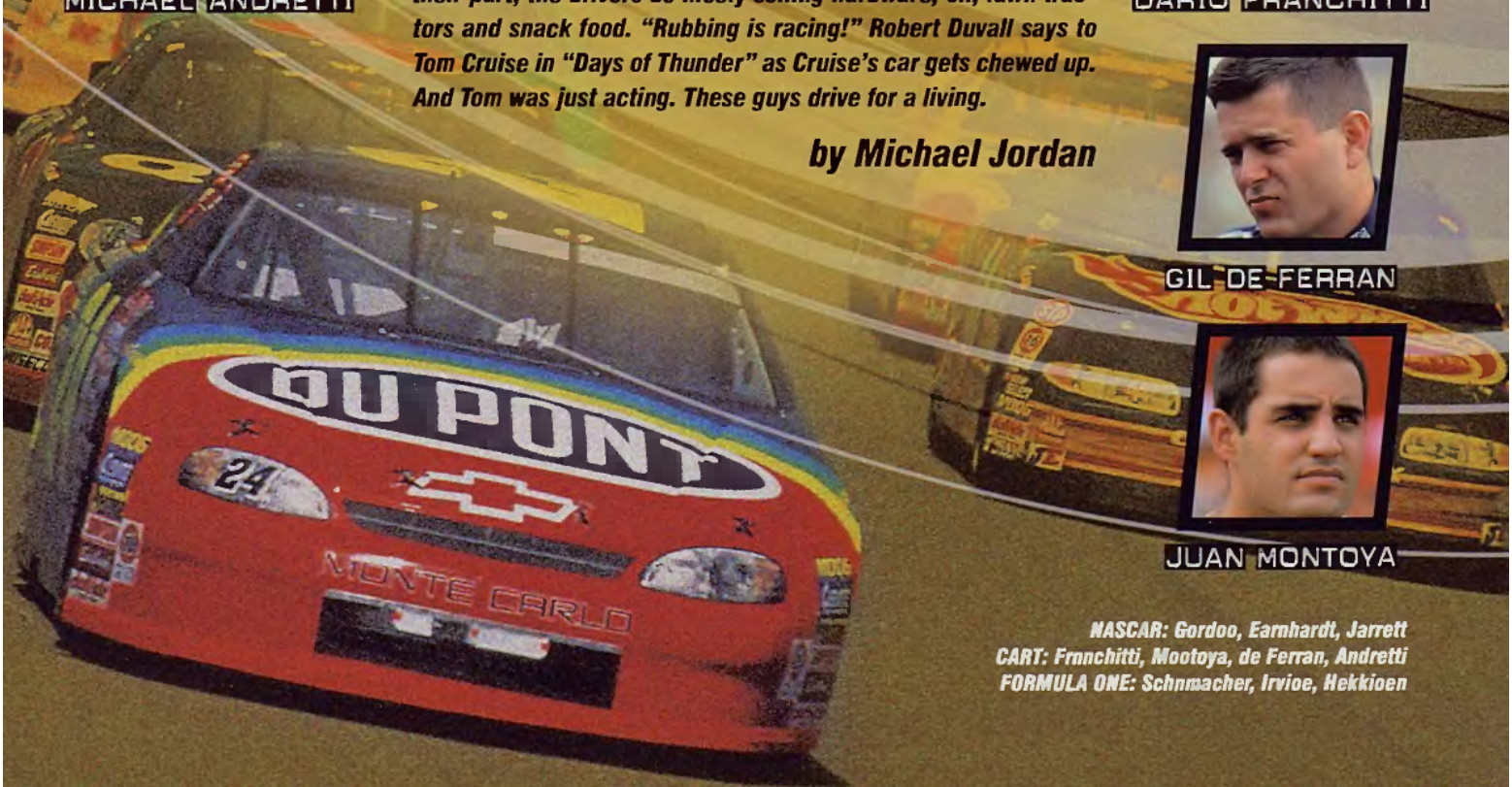
DARIO FRANCHITTI

GIL DE FERRAN

JUAN MONTOYA

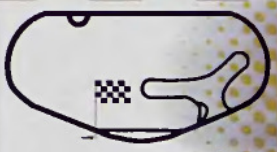
It's a multibillion dollar carnival of guts, skill and speed. People watch because it's terminally exciting—and real. This is no wild-card playoff or made-for-TV golf tournament. This is drivers risking death at 200 mph in machines built like fighter planes. Hollywood's most macho stars—the likes of Clark Gable, Steve McQueen and Paul Newman—have been drawn to the glamour and grit of racing. Of late, racing has exploded in popularity to rival Hollywood's. No other spectator sport draws such huge crowds. Nine of the ten largest sporting events in the U.S. with attendance greater than 100,000 are automobile races. Last fall, TV networks agreed to pay $400 million per year for the broadcasting rights to stock-car racing. Add CART and Formula One, and you're talking serious money. The money to race—an exotic machine can cost upwards of $1 million, and putting it on the track costs many times that—comes from sponsors. They pay willingly because no other sport affords them the opportunity to put a logo on athletes, let alone plaster them with decals. For their part, the drivers do nicely selling hardware, oil, lawn tractors and snack food. "Rubbing is racing!" Robert Duvall says to Tom Cruise in "Days of Thunder" as Cruise's car gets chewed up. And Tom was just acting. These guys drive for a living.

by Michael Jordan



NASCAR: Gordoo, Earnhardt, Jarrett
CART: Frnnchitti, Mootoya, de Ferran, Andretti
FORMULA ONE: Schnmacher, Irvioe, Hekkioen

NASCAR



FAST FACTS *The Daytona 500 is the race every stock-car driver wants to win. A quick lap around the 2.5-mile tri-oval can take less than 47 seconds, which works out to 195 mph. Go to Florida, sit up high in the grandstands, bring binoculars and rent a radio scanner so you can hear the drivers talk to the pits.*

Horsepower: A 5.9-liter V8 engine puts out 750 hp at 8600 rpm. **Weight:** It looks like a passenger car but underneath is a 3400-pound purebred. **Speed:** Top is 200 mph; a quick lap at Daytona is 195 mph. Nascar stock cars were once modified sedans driven by moonshiners, but now they are purpose-built machines constructed around a skeleton of steel tubes. The tracks of the 34-race Winston Cup championship include high-banked speedways, flat one-mile ovals, short-track bullrings and road-racing vastness. The cars generally cost $100,000, so teams construct at least six models for the different tracks in the series. Dale Jarrett won a $2.9 million bonus as the 1999 champ; his team spent $8 million. Drivers earn more from souvenir sales than they win in prize money. Check nascar.com for more information.

CART

FAST FACTS *Mid-Ohio's 2.3-mile circuit is in a wooded farmland near Mansfield. Get there early and view the race from the end of the back straight as the drivers brake to 40 mph, coming down from 180.*

Horsepower: A turbocharged, 2.7-liter V8 makes 850 hp at 15,000 rpm. **Weight:** Each 1550-pound car is built around a tublike structure of carbon fiber. **Speed:** The lap record at the California Speedway is 240.942 mph. The open-wheel CART racers are called Championship (Champ) cars to honor a heritage that goes back to the 1900s and dirt-track races at county fairs. A car costs $450,000, not including the exotic $120,000 engine. CART's 20-race FedEx Championship includes events at high-banked speedways, flat one-mile ovals, road courses and street circuits. Juan Montoya won a million-dollar bonus as the 1999 champ; his team spent $10 million. A dispute between CART and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway led to the formation of the Indy Racing League, which races only on ovals. This year CART drivers will return to the Indy 500 for the first time since 1996, but they will be behind the wheels of less-exotic IRL cars with nonturbo, 650-hp 3.5-liter V8 engines. Check cart.com for more information.

FORMULA ONE

FAST FACTS *Maneuvering a Formula One car around the two-mile street circuit at the Grand Prix of Monaco is like trying to fly a jet fighter in your living room. Watch this classic race from a yacht in the harbor and dress like Eurotrash, hip yet rich.*

Horsepower: A three-liter V10 engine makes 800 hp at 17,000 rpm. **Weight:** An F1 car resembles a CART car, but is smaller and weighs only 1320 pounds. **Speed:** Top is 210 mph; quickest one-lap average is 143 mph in Germany. The Formula One cars from each team are different, built with aerospace technology. Each car costs about $1 million and takes roughly 280 people to design, build and run. The 17-race FIA championship includes events in Europe, North and South America, Australia, Southeast Asia and Japan. Only road race tracks are used. Ferrari pays Michael Schumacher $30 million to drive; it spends $150 million. For more information, visit the website of the Grand Prix of the United States, indyf1.com.

The Women of Motorsports

Women at the races are no longer just trophy queens. They design the cars, drive the cars and run much of the show. They also fill up the grandstands. But something about the hypersexed character of auto racing also brings out their secret selves. Where you go, of course, determines what you get. In Formula One the women are thin and the jewelry is heavy, which is what happens when the scent of money is in the air. The CART series, which visits the top cities in the U.S., draws the best-looking women: casual but smart, these ladies appreciate power (both mechanical and commercial). Nascar has one of the widest bases of female fans this side of the NFL. They're the ones most likely to flip their tops.

WINNING IT IN THE PITS

The difference between first and second place can be tenths of a second, so a pit stop becomes a crucial opportunity to improve track position. In Nascar, seven men can go over the pit wall. Their tools look like those at a gas station, but the jack is made of aluminum, high-speed air wrenches are used and the lug nuts are glued to the wheels to save time. A top crew trains like a football team, practices half a dozen times each day and does the job in 20 seconds. A CART crew is made up of six people and they handle the big hose for the alcohol fuel and can change all the tires in 15 seconds. In F1, the rules allow as many as 20 crew members to service the car, and the job gets done in less than eight seconds. CART and Formula One cars are too fragile to repair in the pits, but a Nascar stocker will keep running even when only duct tape is holding it together.

Racing Movies

Clark Gable, Elvis Presley, James Garner, Paul Newman and Burt Reynolds all starred in racing movies. So did Tom Cruise, in *Days of Thunder*, a story about stock-car racing so witless that the cars got all the best lines. Racers themselves admire Steve McQueen's *Le Mans*, a movie about the race in France. It is rich with the romance of wheels and women and largely unencumbered by dialogue. The best is *Rendezvous*, director Claude Lelouch's harrowing (illicitly filmed) nine-minute race through the streets of Paris in a Ferrari—a man, a car and a woman waiting in the shadow of Sacre Coeur. You can obtain it from motorbooks.com.

PLAYBOY

Is Racing Dangerous?

Mario Andretti says there are only two kinds of racing drivers: Those who have hit the wall and those who are going to hit the wall. Events last year were an unhappy reminder of this brutal fact. F1 driver Michael Schumacher broke a leg. Stock-cab driver Ernie Irvan retired after a series of concussions. Popular CART racer Greg Moore died in a 200-mph crash. And three fans were killed by flying debris at a superspeedway race. Real race fans hate to see anyone hurt, no matter what the tabloids say.

Backseat Driver

Sharing Mario Andretti's office in a CART Champ car

Want to know what it's like out there? Strap yourself onto a paint shaker, ask the hardware store guy to run an electric drill about an inch behind your head and then tear up $100 bills as fast as you can. That's motor racing. Over the years, the still camera, the telephoto lens and now the onboard television camera have all tried to show us what driving a race car is really like. Target/Chip Ganassi Racing went a little further last summer when it built a special two-seat version of its Honda-powered Reynard Champ car. Mario Andretti, now retired from a long career that includes both F1 and CART championships, was the designated driver. We sat just aft in the slightly stretched carbon-fiber tub, our legs splayed outboard of Andretti's hips. It's a tight fit, and the crew has to lean in to cinch the broad straps of the six-point safety belts. You soon learn why, as Andretti lights up the car's rear tires as he leaves the pits, the Honda V8 turning the Firestone racing rubber into smoke. Your body is pinned into the seat, unnaturally heavy, and you can't breathe. As you rush into a corner at 170 mph, Andretti waits impossibly late and then hits the brakes so hard that the rotors glow cherry red. Your body strains forward against the belts at twice its normal weight. As a long corner comes up, you're pressed against the side of the cockpit with the force of 2.86 gs and you still can't breathe. In a race, this goes on for two hours. Your pulse is 150 because of the g-loads; your body temperature is soaring. And then there's the vibration, the noise and—what's that sound every time you grab third gear? It's not as easy as TV makes it look.

CAN YOU BELIEVE THIS?

A CART Champ car is virtually an upside-down wing, a shape designed to be squeezed harder against the ground the faster it goes. Such a car makes 4500 pounds of downforce, almost triple its 1550-pound weight. At 200 mph, the downforce is so great that you could turn it over and it would hug the ceiling.

MOTORMOUTH

"I came into the racetrack and some fans had painted a school bus the same orange as our race car, and I thought, I've arrived."

– NASCAR DRIVER TONY STEWART

Monkey Forest Road

(continued from page 86)

workers ran off, but one old Balinese guy planted his feet, adjusted his yellow and silver sarong, and spit a rind at Andrew Rouse's feet before turning and slowly walking off.

Andrew and Sherm worked until sunset that first day. And the next day Sherm and Andrew worked hard together again, just like the good old days, and then about noon Sherm heard yelling and ran over to the orange grove. The old Balinese guy who had spit out the rind the day before was standing in front of the trees with a grinning mouth bulging with Florida orange. At his feet were a dozen half-eaten oranges. Suddenly, Andrew was truly the old ass-kicking, take-no-prisoners Andrew Rouse. Sherm said he almost broke into a jig as Andrew ripped into the grinning old *eater-of-magical-oranges*.

But when Andrew went back to the bulldozers, Sherm saw the old Balinese guy reach up and pluck another orange. The old guy grinned at Sherm and then prowled around tearing orange after orange from the trees and tossing them over his shoulders. A couple of hours later, while everyone was taking a water break, the interpreter kid Wayan came up screaming. Andrew Rouse followed Wayan at a trot, and behind them ran a couple of dozen curious Balinese workers. Sherm figured it was about all the oranges yanked off the orange trees, but when he got there he saw the ground around the trees was squirming with iridescent green and yellow snakes.

Sherm said he immediately grabbed a machete from one of the workers, and waded in there among the snakes and started hacking off their heads. He said he'd never felt so angry and didn't give a shit if the snakes were poisonous. And then, as snake heads were flying, he felt someone grab his arm on a backswing of the machete, and it was Andrew pulling him away from the snakes, saying how they'd try to deal with the snakes in a peaceable fashion.

At Poppie's Guest House that night Andrew and Victoria walked over to Sherm during dinner. The two asked to sit down and Sherm waved to the empty seats. Sherm said he was pretty depressed at this point, after thinking when Andrew ripped into the old orange eater that his best friend was over his midlife crisis. Andrew Rouse took a long time explaining that evening in Ubud, as the cicadas sent up this roar, how he had talked it over with Victoria and the village *pedanda*, and they had determined that the snakes appeared in the orange grove because he, Andrew Rouse, had restricted access to the oranges. Andrew said he had learned from the *pedanda* that he had acted in an evil manner by yelling at the old Balinese man and the other local workers for eating the oranges, and that the snakes were a manifestation of his evil action. He went on and on about how it was important Sherm understand that there was a delicate balance of good and evil on Bali, but Sherm tuned him out after a while and listened to the roar of the cicadas.

•

The village *pedanda* convinced Andrew Rouse that the best course of action, given the snakes in the orange grove, was to hold off on construction again until the various deities were properly propitiated and the balance of good and evil was, well, balanced. Given the general aura of things going noticeably awry, the cheery Balinese workers were growing dour, and then the guards posted at night to protect the machinery at the Monkey Forest Road site started reporting seeing *leyaks*—evil spirits—in the trees of the surrounding jungle. Apparently the Balinese Hindu workers took *leyaks* very seriously, because most of the remaining workers packed up and left Ubud.

In a strange way, Sherm said, he was pleased by the appearance of the *leyaks*, because at least he could be straight with the Crown Royal management in Singapore, and report *something* truthful about what was slowing down the Ubud project—not that he, Sherman Strickhauser, believed in *leyaks* for a second, but it was the truth that the superstitious Balinese workers were leaving Ubud. Sherm also was pleased to be able to quickly solve the problem of the *leyaks*, as he immediately started importing Muslim workers from Lombok and Java and other Indonesian islands. The Muslims didn't buy easily into *leyak* superstitions.

One afternoon after signing up another bemo-load of deadly serious Muslims, Sherm headed down to the river to take a bath. When he got down there he found a couple of dozen Westerners busily setting up a fashion shoot for CNN. Out of the crowd milling around the silver light reflectors came Victoria. She came right up to Sherm and said, "You're trying to hurt Andrew, aren't you?"

Sherm was flabbergasted. All he wanted was for his friend Andrew to pull his shit together and not throw away his job. He stood there shaking his head.

"You think it's me," Victoria said next.

Sherm was so pissed off at this woman that he just shook his head again.

"Yes, you do," said Victoria.

Sherm finally found his tongue and said, "I've known the guy since before you were born."

Victoria said, "Yes, well, you don't know him that well. Andrew is making up his own mind here. I like where he's going, but I'm not leading him there."

"Bullshit," said Sherm.

"Every day Andrew is more alive," said Victoria. "I watch him coming alive faster and faster."

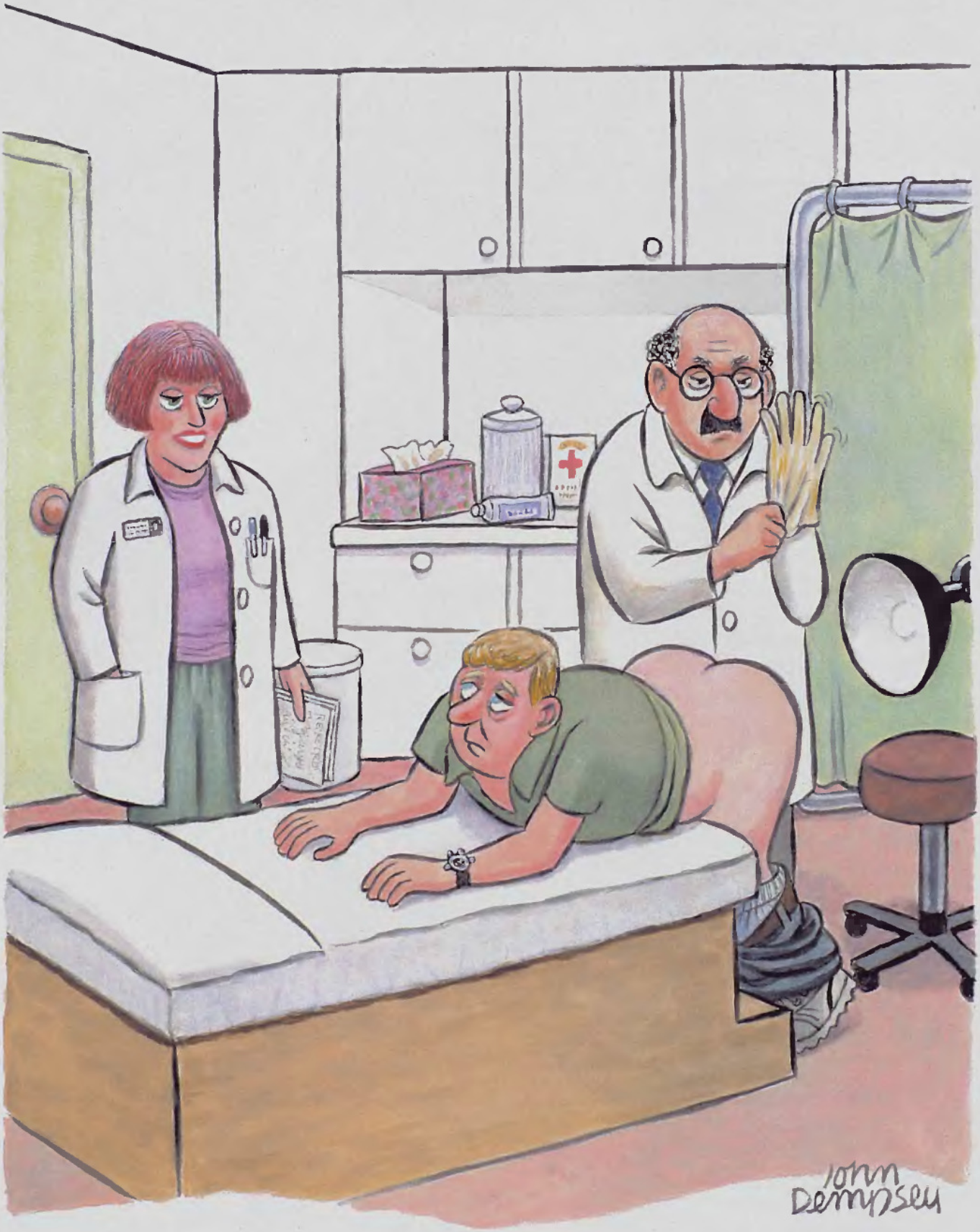
Victoria took a step closer to Sherm, put her hand on his shoulder and added, "Everyone is feeling the negative energy you carry everywhere you go, Sherman. Your vibrations precede you like a storm front. You need to open yourself a little bit, expand your sensitivities."

Victoria walked away from Sherm, and then he took note of the gold Rolex on her wrist. He called after her, "Nice watch." Victoria turned on the path, and Sherm said his next famous one-liner, "I'll tell you one thing I know for sure—sensitivities didn't buy that Rolex on your wrist, princess."

The *sensitivities didn't buy that Rolex* struck a chord with our crowd of engineers in the Rangoon bar. When things quieted down, Sherm went on with his story. Right after his zinger line, he saw all these models coming down the side of the river, the models being led down the riverbank by none other than the old orange-eating Balinese coot with the shit-eating grin. Sherm decided to stand around and watch the fashion shoot, but as soon as the models started splashing around like children in the river, the skies blackened up and there was a dramatic downpour. Sherm saw the director of the shoot run through the sheets of rain over to the old orange-eating Balinese guy and enter into a serious powwow. Then the old Balinese guy started spinning around on the shore of the river like a dervish. For an old guy he was really kicking up his heels. Everyone from the CNN shoot watched the old guy spinning with a serious-as-shit look on their faces. Sherm asked a German model what this was about, and she said the old orange eater was a locally famous witch doctor called a *balian*, and that the director of the fashion shoot had hired the old guy to stop the rain.

The old Balinese guy danced and danced, with the same shit-eating grin on his face. The fashion shoot crowd slowly drifted away from the old guy dancing on the riverbank in the cold rain and scrambled up the muddy hillside on their hands and knees in twos and threes. Sherm and the German model were the last to leave, and when Sherm looked down from the top of

(continued on page 100)



"Don't be embarrassed. You think you're the first guy whose wife stuck the TV remote up his ass?"

AERODYNAMIC DESIGNS AND SPACE MATERIALS:

THE FUTURE IS AT OUR FEET

It's the 21st century, but you wouldn't know it from current clothing designs—where are the Mylar jumpsuits? But look at your feet. Sneakers lead the pack in design. Ever since Air Jordans, athletic shoes have been getting closer to space. No futurist could have pictured the lace-up booster rockets of today. (Some shoes don't even lace up anymore.) Soles don't just bounce, they look ready to lift off. Let the countdown begin.

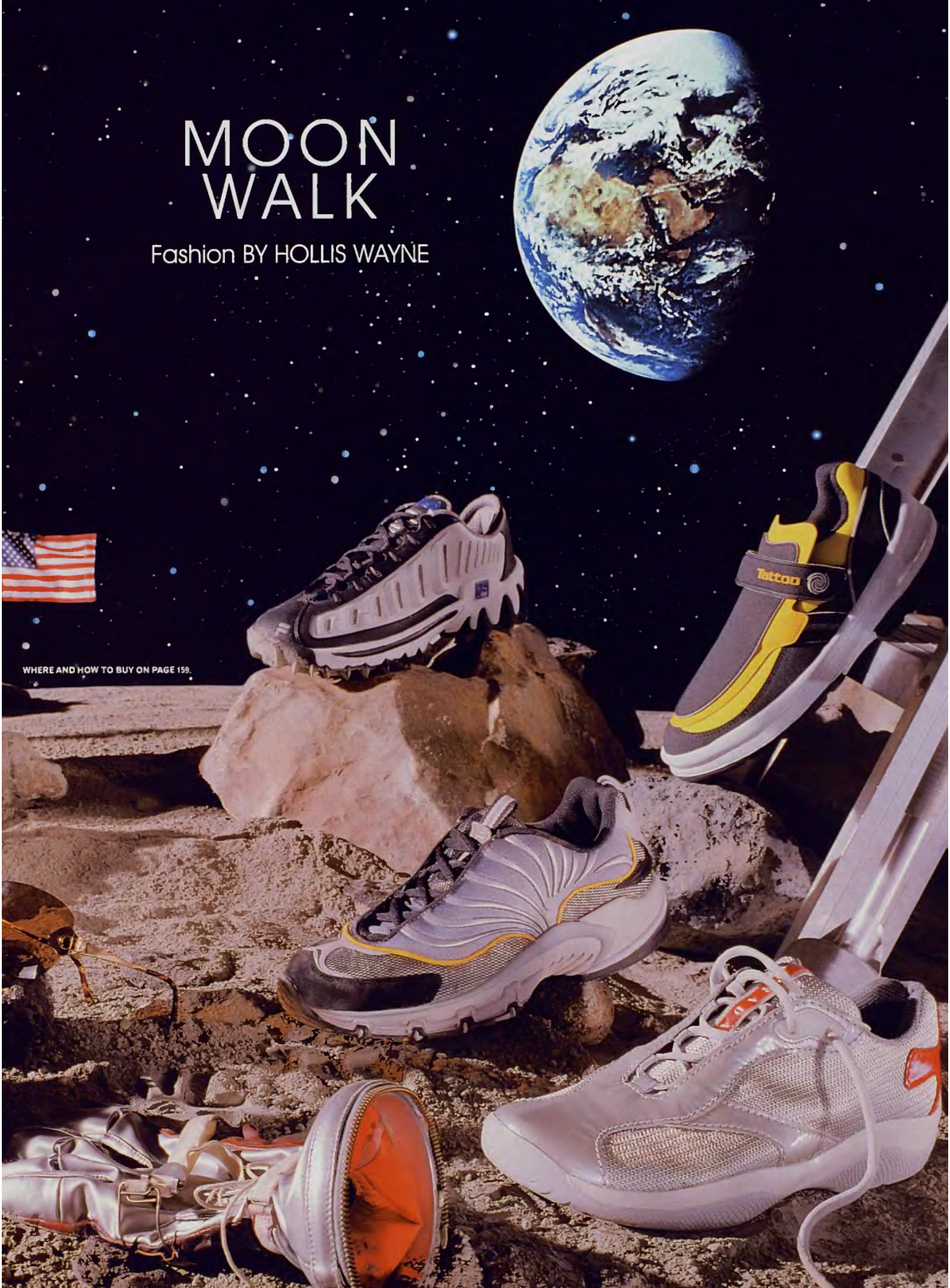
Clockwise from top left: Robo-Jeeves will buckle these sneaks by Royal Elastics ($100). Leather "Sosa Strength" cross-trainers by Fila ($70) get more rubber than a monster truck. The slip-ons by Tattoo ($60) are perfect for wakeboarding behind a space shuttle. Those stripes are called speed lines on the "Horizon" by Fila ($70). Prada sneakers have mesh-and-patent leather uppers ($270). The running shoe by Dolce and Gabbana ($370) has a *Chariots of Fire* look. (The shades are by Christian Dior, $200.) The streamlined "Air Sunder Max Mid" by Nike ($100) has a zip closure for quick exit and reentry, and won't show up on radar either.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHUCK BAKER
PROP STYLING BY EYAL BAROUCH

IF YOU'RE GOING TO SEARCH ONLINE FOR ONE OF THESE ITEMS, TRY PROOUCTS.PLAYBOY.COM

MOON WALK

Fashion BY HOLLIS WAYNE



WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 159.

The Return of the PRIVATE EYE

HE'S THE COOLEST OPERATOR IN BOOKS AND MOVIES. NO WONDER THE DICK IS BACK

That all-American hero, the private eye, arrived with guns blazing in the pages of pulp magazines nearly 80 years ago. From the Twenties to the early Forties, he fought killers, corrupters and saboteurs, homegrown and imported. He sipped cocktails and swung to cool jazz through the postwar Fifties, hunted runaways, battled drug dealers and danced the Watusi in the Sixties and then was rudely shoved into the shadows by superspy James Bond and his Cold Warrior brethren. The Eighties found the P.I. bound and gagged by political correctness, male sensitivity and the female insensitivity of hard-boiled sister shamuses who tried to elbow him out of the profession.

In the Nineties, he seemed set up to follow his forefather, the cowboy, into the big sleep. But suddenly, swept along with the retro-hip rebirth of swing, martini society, quiz shows and the Rat Pack, and just in time for the new millennium—the dick is back.

By rough count there are nearly 100 male private eyes prowling the mean streets of American fiction, with another 20 or so battling wrongos in Australia, Canada and Europe. Led by older pros like Robert B. Parker's Spenser and Lawrence Block's Matt Scudder, and a new generation of gumshoes, including Robert Crais' Elvis Cole and Walter Mosley's Easy Rawlins, the P.I. is once again making his mark on best-seller lists.

He has even rekindled the interest of Hollywood, where the mystery story was tagged D.O.A. three decades ago. In the past few years we've seen an influx of nosy new sleuths, including Bill Pullman's neurotic Sherlock, Daryl Zero, in *Zero Effect*, Nicolas Cage in *8mm*, Paul Newman in *Twilight* and Clint Eastwood in *True Crime*. The mock documentary *Where's Marlowe?* about two gonzo filmmakers who focus on a private eye of the old school and get sucked into one of his cases failed upward from discarded TV pilot to art movie favorite. Denzel Washington's quadriplegic detective matched wits with a serial killer in *The Bone Collector*. And Ewan McGregor's nameless, extremely patient investigator spent more than a decade observing his homicidal but nonetheless captivating quarry (Ashley Judd) in *Eye of the Beholder*.

There's more: In *15 Minutes* Robert De Niro is a detective who teams up with an arson investigator (Edward Burns). Keanu Reeves will be on the trail of a serial killer in *Driven*, and will follow that up with *Shooter*, a suspense flick based on Stephen Hunter's *Point of Impact*. James Ellroy's skip tracer–P.I. Fritz Brown (Michael Rooker) will make his film debut in *Brown's Requiem*.

Where movies go, television follows. The good-guy vampire in *Angel* (David Boreanaz) has opened a private detective agency in Los Angeles, and A&E is airing telemovies based on popular literary dicks. Joe Mantegna has already checked in as Robert Parker's Boston P.I. Spenser in *Spenser: Small Vices*. Maury Chaykin and Tim Hutton are the cerebral, sedentary Nero Wolfe and his resourceful legman Archie Goodwin, respectively, in Rex Stout's *Golden Spiders*. And, shades of Dan Tanna, Sean Patrick Flanery and Guy Torry are two private eyes working Las Vegas in *The Strip* on UPN.

What put the private eye back into the public eye? Ask a dozen mystery writers and many will agree with Bill Crider, author of *Murder Takes a Break* and other mysteries featuring Texas investigator Truman Smith. "You can't keep a good man down," he says. "Americans have always loved the lone hero who has the skill and ability to set things right. It's part of a great literary tradition."

The new breed of dicks is a bit different, however. "The two-fisted superstud no D-cup-packing blonde could resist was fun and relatively harmless," says Gar Anthony Haywood, author of the Aaron Gunner series. "But now that his female contemporaries have taught him it's OK to be human as well as superhuman, his appeal is just that much greater." Les Roberts, whose humane Slovenian American shamus Milan Jacovich appears currently in *The Best-Kept Secret*, is quick to note that "nobody went *too* far in that direction. Who'd want to read about *Alan Alda, Private Eye*?"

Richard Barre, the award-winning author of *Blackheart Highway* and other mysteries about southern California surfer-sleuth Wil Hardesty, sums it up: "We're writing about a shining knight in a tarnished land, a flawed loner who, against the odds, sets out to make things right. Try doing that with a lawyer."

ARTICLE BY DICK LOCHTE

PAINTING BY PHIL HALE

FROM RACE WILLIAMS TO EASY RAWLINS

a short P.I. history

> Just as clean as a whistle I had pulled and shot him straight between his bloodshot eyes.
>
> —RACE WILLIAMS, IN AN EARLY CARROLL JOHN DALY NOVELETTE

The private eye, as we have come to know him, was born on June 1, 1923. His office was between the covers of a pulp magazine titled *Black Mask*, and the name on the door was Race Williams. A tender soul, Williams removed punks with gusto ("I squeezed lead—and the show was over. He was dead five times before he hit the floor"). But as Ron Goulart, editor of the anthology *The Hardboiled Dicks*, has noted, Williams and his creator, Carroll John Daly, always justified his actions: "You can't make hamburger without grinding up a little meat."

The editorial reins of *Black Mask* passed through many hands, including those of George Jean Nathan and H.L. Mencken, before they were firmly grasped by Joseph T. Shaw, a former WWI Army captain who'd never even read the magazine. That accomplished, he settled on one author whose stories would form the prototype for the *Black Mask* style, an ex-Pinkerton detective named Dashiell Hammett.

> When a man's partner is killed he's supposed to do something about it. It doesn't make any difference what you thought of him. He was your partner and you're supposed to do something about it.
>
> —SAM SPADE, IN DASHIELL HAMMETT'S *The Maltese Falcon (1930)*

Hammett's heroes of the Thirties were slightly ruthless, cynical, hard-bitten professionals operating in an era of open lawlessness. The men they dealt with were corrupt and evil, the women not much better. The author's big three were Sam Spade, the most famous of all private eyes, whose fictional adventures are limited to one novel and three short stories; Nick Charles, whom Hollywood dubbed the Thin Man, though in his only novel the title referred to the victim; and the otherwise nameless Continental Op, troubleshooter for the Continental Detective Agency, a fat-and-40 detecting machine who, in *The Dain Curse*, drives a young woman to a state of nervous collapse with his relentless investigation. When her fiancé reprimands him with the words "I hope you're satisfied with the way your work got done," the Op replies, "It got done."

If the Thirties belonged to Spade and the Continental Op, the next decade was the private property of a cultured, hard-drinking, two-fisted and often lonely gent named Philip Marlowe. His author, Raymond Chandler, was British public school–educated, a victim of this country's Depression who, in his 40s, picked up a copy of *Black Mask* and wrote a story that the magazine published later that year. Many novelettes followed, and while the detective's name changed, the character remained the same. He became Philip Marlowe in the novel *The Big Sleep*.

Marlowe's books are all first-person narratives, allowing him to be introspective, to make a few judgments of his own, to be wrong about a few things and to enjoy it when he is right. Chandler's rich use of similes and metaphors has never been matched, and his flowing commentary on southern California could form a tourist guidebook and probably has. Along with his penchant for cynical observations and wisecracks, Marlowe was endowed with a strong code of justice and was driven to do all he could to restore morality and justice to a corrupt world.

Setting oneself up as moral arbiter was a tough job for both hero and author. Reflecting Chandler's growing disillusionment with his own life and times, Marlowe's narrative soured and took on a note of desperation.

> Let the telephone ring, please. Let there be somebody to call up and plug me into the human race again. Even a cop. . . . Nobody has to like me. I just want to get off this frozen star.
>
> —PHILIP MARLOWE, IN RAYMOND CHANDLER'S *The Little Sister (1949)*

Chandler died March 26, 1959, of bronchial pneumonia. Throughout his literary life he bitterly regretted that the establishment had shunned him, that he had never been accepted as a genuine novelist. As he put it in a letter years before his death, "I'm a little tired myself and a little discouraged. Having just read the admirable profile of Hemingway in *The New Yorker*, I realize that I am much too clean to be a genius, much too sober to be a champ and far, far too clumsy with a shotgun to live the good life."

Regardless, his protagonist became the model for all ensuing eyes. Some embraced his ideals, others his flippant speech. *(continued on page 156)*

Six P.I. Movies You Didn't See But Should Have

(1) *The Maltese Falcon* (a.k.a. *Dangerous Female*) (1931). Not in the same class with John Huston's version, this first film adaptation of the Hammett novel nevertheless hews just as closely to the book and has the distinction of having been made in roughly the same period. Ricardo Cortez' Sam Spade is silkier than Bogart's and a shade more decadent.

(2) *You Never Can Tell* (1951). In this fantasy, a murdered dog returns to earth in human form to hunt down his killer. Dick Powell's entertaining sleuth-hound is like Philip Marlowe with fleas. But even with him constantly nibbling kibble, the film manages to be as witty and suspenseful as it is goofy.

(3) *Darker Than Amber* (1970). Rod Taylor certainly wouldn't be anybody's idea of a physical stand-in for Travis McGee, but he gets an A for attitude. The Miami and Caribbean locations look fine, director Robert Clouse knew how to stage a good fight, William Smith is a top-notch villain and this remains the only feature film appearance by John D. MacDonald's famous character.

P.I. Style, Then and Now

I was wearing my powder blue suit, with dark blue shirt, tie and display handkerchief, black brogues, black wool socks. I was neat, clean, shaved and sober and I didn't care who knew it. I was everything the well-dressed private detective ought to be. I was calling on 4 million dollars.
—PHILIP MARLOWE, CALLING ON A CLIENT, IN CHANDLER'S *The Big Sleep (1939)*

I was wearing blue jeans, white sneakers, a white oxford shirt, n gray and blue tie, and n dust-colored linen jacket. My glasses were clean, and the two small surgical steel hoops in my left earlobe sparkled.
—ATTICUS KODIAK, CALLING ON A CLIENT, IN GREG RUCKA'S *Smoker (199B)*

I set myself on my heels and hit him in the jaw. It wasn't the smartest thing to do. My legs were middle-aging, and still wobbly. If I missed the nerve, he cauld cut me to ribbons with his left nlone. But the connection was goud. I left him lying.
—LEW ARCHER, GETTING TOUGH, IN MACDONALD'S *The Barbarous Coast (1956)*

Evandro's hands clawed at my face and I dug my hands into the flesh under his rib cage. I spun, tightening my fingers on his lowest ribs, and hurled him aver Angie's vanity chest and into the mirror. I watched his slim body crest her makeup and crash through the glass. The mirror cracked in large, jagged pieces the shape af dorsal fins and the candle flames sputtered, then flared as they fell to the flonr. I dove over the bed as he came down and the entire vanity came with him.
—PATRICK KENZIE ,GETTING TOUGH, IN DENNIS LEHANE'S *Darkness, Take My Hand (1996)*

Dinah stuck to gin. I tried that for a while, too, and then had another gin and laudanum. For a while after that I plnyed n game, trying to hold my eyes open as if I were awake, even though I couldn't see anything out of them. When the trick wueldn't fonl her anymore I gave it up. The last thing I remembered was her helping me on to the living room Chesterfield.
—THE CONTINENTAL OP, BEING ENTERTAINED BY A LADY, IN HAMMETT'S *Red Harvest (1929)*

I should have realized that I'd fucked up when the blow job was too good, too professional. But just as soon as the thought came, so did I. And a thin, sharp needle plunged into my thigh, so sharp and thin I didn't really notice it until I realized I was completely paralyzed, conscious but without muscular control. I had to watch without resistance as the blonde quickly stripped me out of my clothes. All of them.
—MILO MILODRAGOVITCH, BEING ENTERTAINED BY A LADY, IN JAMES CRUMLEY'S *Bordersnokes (1996)*

The Best Detective Novels Ever

(1) *The Maltese Falcon*, Dashiell Hammett
(2) *The Big Sleep*, Raymond Chandler
(3) *The Long Goodbye*, Raymond Chandler
(4) *Farewell, My Lovely*, Raymond Chandler
(5) *The Little Sister*, Raymond Chandler
(6) *Red Harvest*, Dashiell Hammett
(7) *I, The Jury*, Mickey Spillane
(8) *A Is for Alibi*, Sue Grafton
(9) *Eight Million Ways to Die*, Lawrence Block
(10) *Too Many Cooks*, Rex Stout

Ten Dicks Worth Hiring

If it's a top-of-the-line P.I. you want, who are you going to call?

(1) *Bill Pronzini's "Nameless."* Working more or less continuously in San Francisco since 1971. Has undergone mnny personal ordeals—a cancer scare, a spiky romnnce that has led to a difficult marringe, the suicide of his former partner and the desertion of a few publishers. Still, his success average is high, his reputation solid.

(2) *Jue Gores' Dan Kearny.* Heads up the San Francisco detective ageacy bearing his initials, DKA. Still the same famaasly unsentimental pro he was in his first hardcover nppearnnce in *Deed Skip*, back in 1972. You're out just hiring Kearay, you're hiring his whole crew of liknble if sometimes loopy associntes.

(3) *Robert B. Parker's Spenser.* In business since 1973. Originnlly a Boston-bred clone of Philip Marlowe; is now his owa man. Whips up gourmet dishes while being a sensitive guy with his difficult main squeeze. Faces off thugs and killers with flair and humor. If your case requires action too morally borderline for Spenser to handle, he'll call in his more progmatic pal Hawk.

(4) *Lawrence Block's Matthew Scudder.* Debuted in *The Sins of the Fathers* (1976) as a boozer wracked with guilt over having accidentally shot a seven-year-old girl. Slow self-improvement kick has paid off. Currently sober and happily married to a bright, self-sufficient former call girl. If yaur problem is particularly hniry, he may seek homicidal assistance from Mick Ballou, a churchgoing Irish mobster buddy.

(5) *Loren Estleman's Amos Walker.* Honorable, dependable sleuth employing wisecrack, wit and muscle. Has been getting the job done in Detroit since 1980. Not crazy aboet divarce work.

(6) *Jeromiah Heely's John Francis Cuddy.* Boston P.I. with lew troining. Uses attoraey's skills in eliciting information. Not as flashy as fellow Beantowner Spenser, nor does he eat as well. But he delivers results. Widowed for more than 15 years, he still visits his Inte wife's grave to discass his cases. Even weirder, he follows her advice.

(7) *Robert Crais' Elvis Cole.* Originally modeled after Parker's Spenser, with smart mouth, gourmet palate and dnngerous sidekick (Joe Pike). Is hipper and considerably less smug than Spenser, and thanks to LA sunshine, has a better tan. Will work for Disney collectibles.

(8) *Sue Grafton's Kinsey Millhone.* As tough and resilient and clever as any of her brothers in the racket. Almost single-handedly kept the fictional private eye from drooping shut in the late Eighties. Then, in an astonishing show of strength and staying power, went on to top best-seller lists with a frequency that would have brought tears to Philip Marlowe's eyes. The only trick to hiring her today is that (as Grafton points out in the current *O Is for Outlaw*) she's "caught up in a time warp and is currently living and working in the year 1986."

(9) *Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer.* Veteron of the Big One, WWII. Past retirement age, but is still able to go biblical when hunting killers: vengeance will forever be his. Likes the dolls, but is troe to his beloved secretary Velda. And never lets the Indies stand in the way of business.

(10) *Sara Paretsky's V.I. Warshawski.* With Grafton's Millhone, kept the PI game going through the hard-scrabble Eighties and early Nineties. Hnrd-boiled, tough and resourceful, can handle nearly any case. Record is especially strong when it comes to getting the goods on establishment greedheads. In her own way, ns veageful ns the Hammer.

(4) *Gumshoe* (1972). Albert Finney is a struggling British stage comic who decides to change his luck by opening a private inquiry office nnd doing n Bogey. Stephen Frears directed. Andrew Lloyd Webber supplied the score.
(5) *Hickey and Boggs* (1972). Directed by Robert Culp from a hard-boiled script by Walter Hill. Culp and his *I Spy* cohort Bill Cosby are two down-and-out private dicks in a slightly surreal California. The result is not all fun and games. Oddball, downbeat, yet strongely effective.
(6) *Twilight* (1998). Directed by Robert Benton from his and Richard Russo's original script. An aging P.I., freeloading on a friend's estate, agrees to "do a little favor" for his host and winds up involved in a murder case that spans decades. Critics correctly proised the ecting—by Paul Newman as the detective, Gene Hackman as the buddy and Suson Sarandon as the buddy's wife, whom they both love. But they missed the boat by labeling this strikingly crafted film old-fashioned. Its depiction of contemporory southera Cnlifornia, with its wistful memories of the pest mixing it up with todny's bomicidal excesses, is as up-to-the-minete as any material the Cuees or the Farrellys might offer.

And one you can be thankful you missed

The Adventures of Ford Fairlane (1990). Directed by Renny Harlin, this was an attempt to lnunch a rock-and-roll P.I. series starring Andrew Dice Cley. What more do you need to know?

Monkey Forest Road

(continued from page 92)

the riverbank through the shifting sheets of rain, the old guy was still dancing alone down there. As Sherm walked up Monkey Forest Road he bumped into Andrew Rouse, and was suddenly so pissed that he was barely able to speak but managed to push out another one-liner, "Witch doctor, down by the river, dancing to stop the rain—you probably want to check it out."

Sherm banged his fist over the laughter of the engineers in the Rangoon bar. "And right when my best friend Andrew Rouse goes down to the river and sees the witch doctor dancing, what the hell happens?"

"The bloody rain stopped!" yelled one of the engineers.

All the engineers in the Rangoon bar sympathized with this bad luck. It was obvious to all that for a guy with his head up his ass as far as Andrew Rouse, this sort of bullshit coincidence of the rain stopping was bound to lead to more trouble.

•

The engineers groaned when all the candles suddenly blew out in the Rangoon bar. The bartender hobbled over and angrily slapped the wooden shutters shut on the windows and barred the door. As the bartender looked for a match back in the rear of the bar, Sherm told us in the dark how the next day when he showed up at the Monkey Forest Road construction site with a cup of java in hand, he saw his best friend standing in the orange grove with the same old rain-dancing, orange-eating Balinese *balian*.

When Sherm walked over to the *balian* and Andrew Rouse that morning, he noticed the orange grove was still full of the squirming yellow-and-green snakes. He didn't have to tell us engineers what was going on: Andrew Rouse had hired the old *balian* to get rid of the snakes. Sherm said he was finally going to take off the gloves, try one last time to shake up his old friend. Sherm said he had gotten a fax from Crown Royal management that morning telling him he had better get the project up to speed, or they were sending a troubleshooter from Singapore, and he and Andrew would be on the next plane to Toronto.

But just as Sherm walked up to Andrew Rouse that morning, the old Balinese *balian* slipped off his sandals and stepped in among the snakes. Sherm had heard that the snakes were puff adders and deadly poisonous. The *balian* stood there amidst the snakes in his bare feet, and soon workers were running from all directions to see the performance. The *balian* closed his eyes—Sherm was sure he was looking—and started to walk back and forth among the snakes. Sherm decided the old coot was going to get himself killed, and went forward yelling at the bastard to get the bloody hell out of there, but Andrew ran over and grabbed him by the arm and told him to let the *balian* work. The *balian* bent over and appeared to be talking to the snakes, and then raised his arms and danced. Sherm said the *balian* was doing the same tired dance routine he did to stop the rain, except his eyes were apparently closed. Then the *balian* suddenly reached down and snatched a snake from the ground, and wrapped it around his neck. He danced now facing the crowd, motioning with his hands as if he were asking them to join him in his snake-charming dance.

Sherm said the dance went on way too long, and he suddenly couldn't stop laughing. He said he laughed because the other snakes were sunbathing and ignoring the dancing old coot, and he was sure at that moment that after 20 years of busting his ass for Crown Royal, he was about to lose his job because of this crazy old snake charmer. The old *balian* heard him laugh, stopped dancing and opened one eye and surveyed Sherm from among the snakes. The *balian* said something quickly to the kid translator Wayan, who ran over to Andrew Rouse and whispered in his ear. Then Sherm saw Andrew Rouse open his wallet and start handing over thousands of rupiahs. Sherm watched as the old *balian* made a small pile of the rupiahs on the ground, whipped out a lighter from nowhere and started burning the cash. He fanned the flames and motioned for more cash from Andrew, who without hesitation ran over among the snakes and kept feeding him the rupiahs. Sherm stopped at this point in his story, and at the same moment the bartender found a match and lit a candle in front of his face. He looked around at all us expatriate engineers as if he wanted us to finish this part of the story, and one engineer yelled out, "And a couple of hours later, no bloody snakes!"

Sherm pointed at the engineer who had yelled the right answer, and downed a shot with his free hand. There was some sympathy expressed to Sherm at the bad luck of the snakes vamoosing, strengthening as it clearly would his best friend Andrew Rouse's growing delusions.

Sherm raised his hand, and the engineers grew quiet. The monsoon was rattling the windows as if there were *leyaks* out there in the streets of Rangoon. Sherm had a puffy drinker's face, and the flickering candlelight coming from almost under his chin didn't flatter. He didn't look like the same hearty beef-faced Canadian guy he did with the fluorescent lights on. He almost could have been a *leyak* himself there in the candlelight at the end of the bar.

And then one of the engineers yelled out, "What about Victoria?"

Sherm nodded and went on with his story. Neither Andrew Rouse nor Victoria showed up at Poppie's Guest House for dinner that evening. After the sun set, the kid Wayan came to him out of the shadows as he sat drinking scotch on the porch, and said Victoria wished to see him at the construction site. Sherm walked down Monkey Forest Road with a flashlight. He said there was the smell of burning pig in the air. He heard a *kul-kul* drum beating in a banyan tree from a nearby village. I remembered those drums: Each Balinese village had its own *kul-kul* drum language, though I had heard that fewer and fewer young Balinese could understand their village drum as it spoke to them.

When Sherm got to the construction site he found Victoria sitting on a bulldozer talking to one of the Muslim guards. The guard faded away as Sherm came up. Without saying a word Victoria handed Sherm a dog-eared pamphlet. He shined the flashlight on the hand-written cover and read in English under Bahasa Indonesian: *How to Stop the Rain*.

"The *balian*'s book," said Victoria in the dark. "Andrew's gone off with him for the night."

"You didn't go?"

"I told you already, Sherman. It isn't me."

"Where's Andrew?"

"The *balian*'s going to purify him tonight up at his village. The ritual's supposed to take all night."

Sherm said the way she spoke, it didn't take a rocket scientist to figure out she was no longer too pleased with her middle-aged lover-boy Andrew Rouse.

Victoria was quiet for a while sitting there in the bulldozer. Sherm said he could still hear the *kul-kul* drum in the distant banyan tree. Without another word to Victoria, Sherm left the construction site. As he made his way back up to Poppie's Guest House, he came on the kid translator Wayan and asked him if he knew where this *balian* lived. At first, the kid Wayan didn't want to talk, but Sherm kept peeling off rupiahs in the darkness, and eventually the kid whispered, "*I know where.*"

Sherm said he grabbed his bottle of Dewar's off the porch at Poppie's and jumped in a Suzuki jeep with the kid.

(continued on page 144)

"Well, please inform Pilot Officer Yakamoto that our glorious emperor and the whole general staff of our most sacred imperial forces feel that it just might be a little late in the day for a sick note from his mother."

PHOTOGENIC LENZ

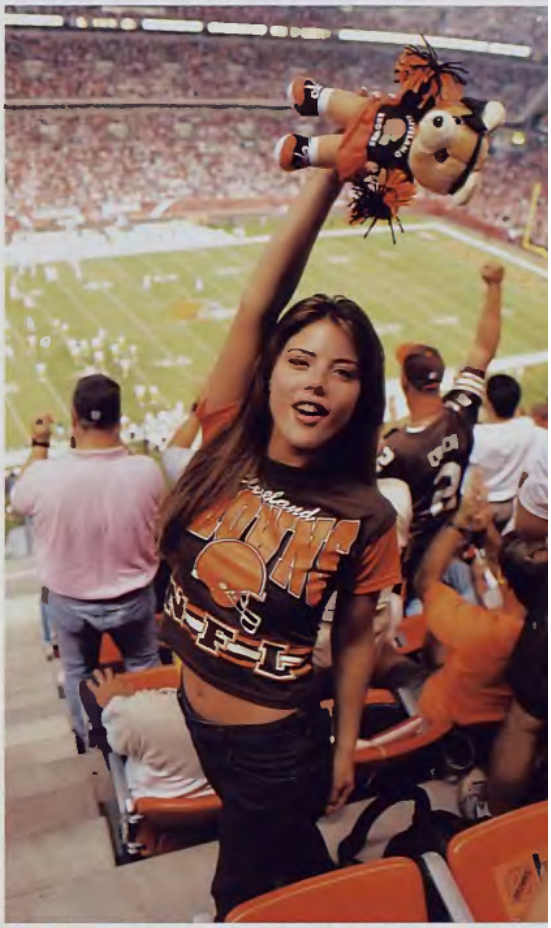
our miss march is cleveland's newest attraction

WE'VE NOTICED, with some surprise, that Cleveland has begun to pop up more often on our radar. We've listened to the legends and admired the artifacts at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, cheered an Indians home stand and applauded Shakespeare at the Cleveland Playhouse. Recently we discovered another local attraction: Nicole Marie Lenz. Nikki picked us up one afternoon at Public Square and took us to a favorite restaurant—her uncle's deli—for corned beef. Then it was off to the lakeshore to view the setting sun, framed by iron ore unloaders and passing freight trains. Clearly, this is a city richly endowed with brawn and beauty.

Q: What's the reaction when folks learn you hail from Cleveland?
A: In Los Angeles people look at me and go, "How could that happen?" I laugh. Everything is better in this town now. I was here for the opening of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. There are nice restaurants, and people are taking business more seriously. We've built up

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHEN WAYDA AND JOHN R. MOURGOS

Former cheerleoder Nicole boosts the Cleveland Browns. She rates plenty of cheers herself, from "my young aunts, who think my being a Playmate is the coolest thing I could be doing" and "the boys on my father's side of the family." And from the rest of us.



The steelmaking neighborhoods along the Cuyahoga spawned a serious bowling culture. Not content with scoring strikes the old-fashioned way, Clevelanders came up with midnight bowling. The lights are about to go out. (OK, rules allow a strobe.)

our nightclub scene in the Flats and the Warehouse District. Little Italy has the best food, and it's cool, especially if you like Italians as much as I do. All these things put us back on the map as cool people.

Q: There's a large lake in the neighborhood. Can you tell us a fish story?

A: Lake Erie is beautiful. I roller-skate right down to Edgewater Park and go swimming. I have my best times of summer at the beach. I've been swimming in California. You get a gulp of that salt water—yuck! You can take a gulp of Lake Erie and you'll be fine.

Q: How deep do your Cleveland roots run?

A: My mom's grandfather had the honor of planting the flagpole on top of Terminal Tower when it was completed in 1930.

Q: Are you handy with a hammer or trowel?

A: When I was growing up I helped my dad, who's a contractor. I learned how to lay tile, hang drywall and nail floorboards. Grouting tile is my favorite. You need to know your math to get exact measurements. But I won't touch plumbing or electrical work.

Q: Are you going to pitch us some real estate?

A: I live in the Ohio City district. It's all original homes, some redone. My house is beautiful. It was built in the 1860s. It's got a winding staircase, 15-foot ceilings and a marble fireplace in every room. I'll have to move to LA or New York, where there are more modeling jobs, but I won't be able to leave Cleveland without knowing I can come back.

Q: Speaking of modeling, do you have a role model?

A: I have pictures of Marilyn Monroe all over my room. I've seen all of her movies and have a tape of her singing *Happy Birthday* to President Kennedy. That's one of my favorite performances of all time. What I would do for that dress!

Q: Can we bet you won't be laying tile any time soon?

A: I doubt I'll go into contracting. I've only been modeling for a year, and I never thought I was good enough to pursue it as a career. PLAYBOY has given me that confidence. It's an accomplishment. I guess there's a comparison to planting the flagpole on top of Terminal Tower.

MISS MARCH
PLAYBOY'S PLAYMATE OF THE MONTH

PLAYMATE DATA SHEET

NAME: Nicole Marie Lenz

BUST: 32 WAIST: 24 HIPS: 32

HEIGHT: 5'5" WEIGHT: 105

BIRTH DATE: 1-24-80 BIRTHPLACE: Cleveland, Ohio

AMBITIONS: Modeling is my passion, but if Paris & Milan don't call, I'll settle for a film career.

TURN-ONS: Italian men with curly hair — if only I could compete with their Ferraris. Lake Erie sunsets.

TURNOFFS: Beards & mustaches, garlic breath, Cleveland drivers.

SHAKE ME! WAKE ME! The clock is ticking, I can't be late.

WHEN YOU'RE YOUNG AND ON YOUR OWN: Learn from the birds, have no fear of flying and don't look back!

A HEALTHY SPRINGTIME BALANCE: Limit the cleaning, be sure to plant your garden and break out your Rollerblades.

MODELING TIPS: Get lots of sleep (I'm good at that!) Stay alert and listen to directions.

REMODELING TIP: Girls, protect your manicure, always wear gloves when mixing grout & spackle.

my first portfolio shot

Get that touchdown!

gymnastics: a "perfect" 8? let me try modeling

PLAYBOY'S PARTY JOKES

"I've been ravished by a lawyer," the woman told the desk sergeant.

"What's his name?" the cop asked.

"I don't know," she replied.

"Where does he work?"

"I don't know."

"Have you ever encountered this man before today?"

"No, I haven't."

"Ma'am," the baffled cop said, "then how do you know he's a lawyer?"

"Because he wore an expensive three-piece suit, drove a German sedan, had a leather briefcase and," she emphasized, "I had to do 50 percent of the work!"

A British taxidermist was sweating his way through the Australian outback when he finally came across a tavern. He staggered in past the lager-swilling locals and asked the bartender, "May I trouble you for a gin and tonic, my good man?"

"Geez, cobbers," one of the locals said to his mates, "what kind of a fucking man's drink is that?" Then, turning to the Englishman, "Hey! You! Yes, you, you fucking Pom! Gin and fucking tonic? Are you some fucking kind of a poofter or something?"

"Well, actually," the Englishman replied, "I'm a taxidermist."

"Oh yeah? And what's a taxidermist?"

"Well, I mount dead animals."

"It's all right, cobbers," the local bellowed. "He's one of us!"

A newlywed asked her husband if he would like dinner. "That would be great!" he said. "What are my choices?"

"Yes or no."

THIS MONTH'S MOST FREQUENT SUBMISSION: One day a group of scientists got together and decided that man had come a long way and no longer needed God, so they picked one scientist to go tell him. "God," the appointee said, "we've decided we no longer need you. We can cure diseases, clone people and create life, so why don't you just go on your way."

God listened patiently to the man, then said, "Very well. But first let's have a man-making contest, doing it just like I did back in the old days with Adam."

"Sure, no problem," the scientist said, bending down to scoop up a handful of dirt.

"No, no, no," God admonished. "Get your own dirt."

PLAYBOY CLASSIC: A mortician was working late one night preparing bodies for burial. As he examined the body of a Mr. Schwartz, he made an amazing discovery: The man had the longest penis he had ever seen. "I'm sorry, Mr. Schwartz," the mortician said, "but this has to be saved for posterity." The mortician detached the dead man's schlong, stuffed it into a briefcase and took it home. "Honey," he said to his wife as he reached in to recover his prize, "I have something to show you that you won't believe."

"Oh my God," she screamed as it came into view. "Schwartz is dead!"

How can you spot a WASP household? The *TV Guide* is in hardcover.

While visiting Paris, a wealthy businessman wanted to learn something about real life in the city, so he took the subway everywhere. One day he saw a strikingly beautiful girl get off at his stop. The man was so smitten, he approached her.

"Excuse me, mademoiselle," he said. "If you let me kiss you, I will give you $1000."

She thought for a moment and agreed. The man took her face in his hands and kissed her. Handing her the $1000, he said, "If you let me touch your breasts, I will give you $2000."

She thought it over and agreed again. He touched her breasts and paid her. Then, gathering all his courage, he said, "Mademoiselle, I want to make love with you. How much would I have to pay?"

"Fifty francs—just like everybody else."

Why did the blonde press *, 0 and # on the touch-tone phone? She wanted instructions on playing tic-tac-toe.

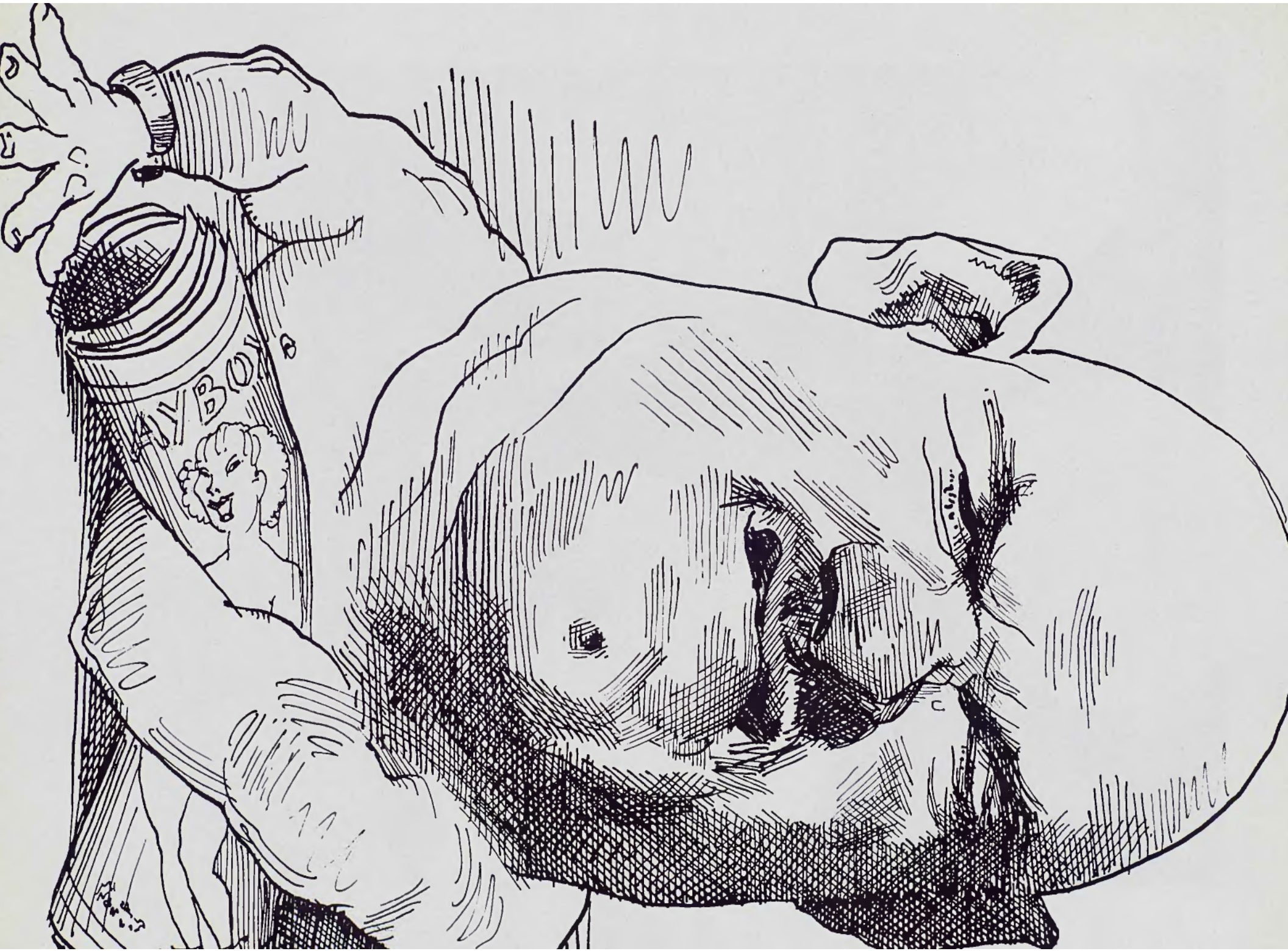
An older couple was playing in their country club's annual golf championship. On the playoff hole the wife had to make a six-inch putt to win. She took her stance, putted and missed.

On the way home in the car her husband was fuming. "I can't believe you missed that putt! It was no longer than my willy."

"Yes, dear," she said sweetly, "but it was much harder!"

Send your jokes on postcards to Party Jokes Editor, PLAYBOY, *680 North Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, Illinois 60611, or by e-mail to jokes@playboy.com. $100 will be paid to the contributor whose submission is selected. Sorry, jokes cannot be returned.*

"Great heavens, Dale, surely you knew why we always call him 'Flash' Gordon?"


AYBOY

Jesse II

He blasts away at the drug war, Picasso and Steven Seagal. Hmm. Maybe the governor wouldn't make such a bad president after all

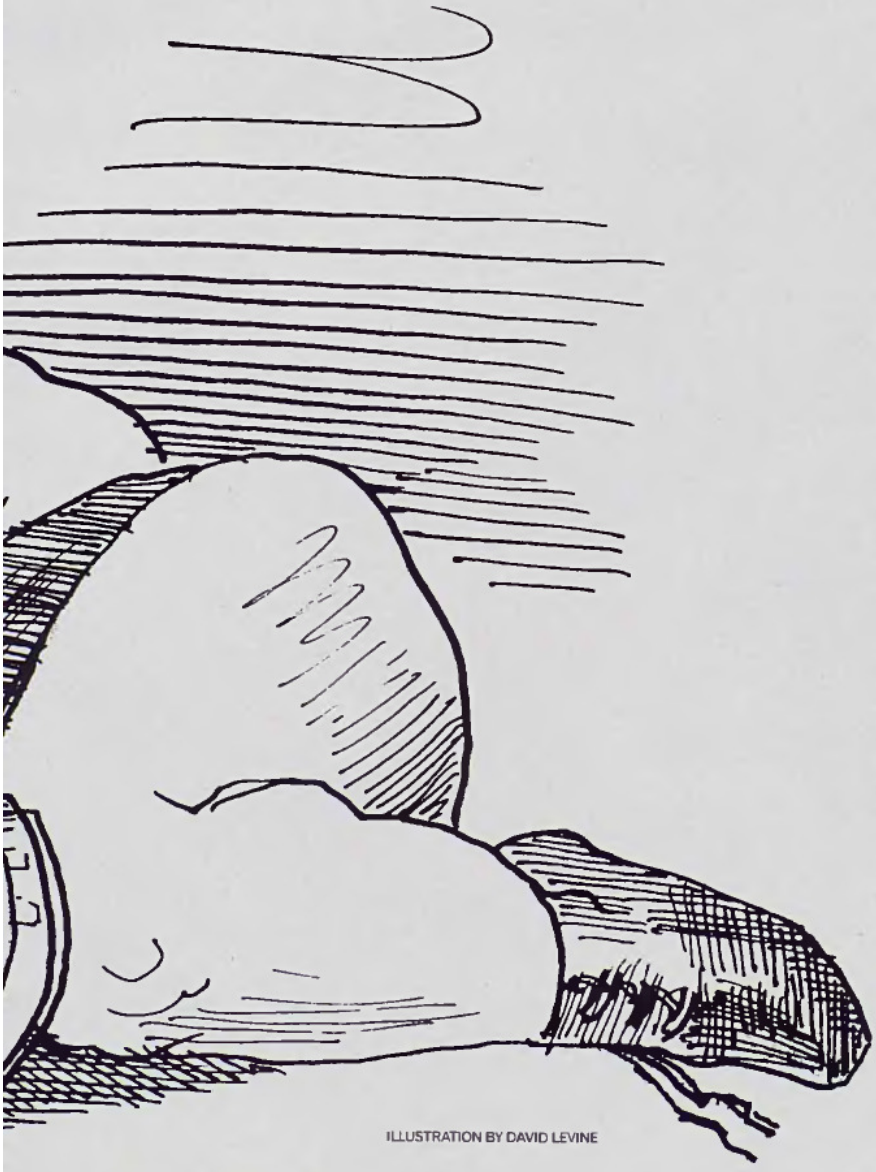


ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID LEVINE

THE REACTION to November's *Playboy Interview* with Jesse Ventura was immediate. Letters, e-mails and phone calls started coming soon after the issue hit the newsstand, all asking the same question: Is there more? The answer, fortunately, is yes. *Playboy Interviews* are extensive and wide-ranging, and even though they run at considerable length, occasionally interesting material is cut because of a lack of space. This was true in Ventura's case—his expansive candor gave us a wealth of answers to choose from.

We could hardly be surprised that people wanted to know more. After all, Ventura's remarks about organized religion ("a sham and a crutch for weak-minded people"), overweight people ("they can't push away from the table") and the JFK assassination ("the military-industrial complex" killed him) caused a media firestorm. As a result, he was on the cover of *Newsweek*, and featured on the major network and cable news shows several nights running. He appeared on Sunday morning TV news shows and newsmagazines with Tim Russert, Chris Matthews, George Will, Sam Donaldson, Cokie Roberts and Barbara Walters, and even visited *Letterman*.

Love him or hate him, no politician in America is as outspoken and controversial as the former wrestler. Because of the unprecedented interest in the governor, we've returned to the transcript from our original interview and culled additional comments, all forthright and original, from Jesse "the Interview" Ventura.

PLAYBOY: You've compared yourself to Rodney Dangerfield's character in *Back to School*. Why?

VENTURA: When I first won office, I didn't get no respect from the two political parties. I use that Rodney character because there you have a person who is street smart and has to do battle with Professor Barbay, who is book smart. And the professor's telling the kids how to create this business, but Rodney knows reality. All these professors in college who are supposed to be experts: If they're so good, why aren't they out in the private sector? Who are they that they can teach? In a business course I would rather get instruction from a Donald Trump, who can show what he's *(continued on page 158)*

BY LAWRENCE GROBEL

CyberCam

HOW TO BE AN INDIE MOVIE MOGUL

camcorders, computers, cd burners—the gear you need to get "blair witch" rich

electronics by TED C. FISHMAN

IT USED TO BE easy to talk yourself out of a career as movie director. First there was film school, harder to get into than Princeton. Then you had to crack the closed Hollywood system and spend years sucking up to super-egos in hopes of someday being charged with one of the couple hundred feature films produced each year. That's about one movie for every million screenplays, because practically every schmo west of New York City is pitching a screenplay.

Fret not. Odds have shifted in your favor. With a little digital technology and the few thousand dollars it takes to own a digital camcorder and desktop computer editing system, you can make your own movies. In fact, with the Internet to distribute your films, you could be studio, director and broadcast network all in one.

We're talking professional quality here. Some digital video films have screened at the Cannes and Sundance film festivals (the Danish film *The Celebration* received the Jury's Special Award in 1998 at Cannes). That phenomenon known as *The Blair Witch Project*, shot largely on video for $40,000, racked up millions at the box office last summer and owned the new-release shelves at video stores when it debuted on VHS tape and DVD last fall.

Mainstream Hollywood is going digital, too. George Lucas has announced that his next *Star Wars* movie won't use a scrap of old-fashioned film stock; it all will be shot on tape with digital camcorders or be generated by computer.

Of course, the average guy doesn't have the credit card limit necessary to own Lucas' digital toys. Mass-market computer technology may eventually allow you to conjure annoying animated aliens and to blow up planets. But for now, the ambitions of digital filmmakers focus more on documentaries and straight dramatic features, which require few, if any, whiz-bang effects.

In fact, this pure approach to filmmaking has spawned an aesthetic ideology best embodied by a group called Dogma 95. Its most famous member is Danish director Lars von Trier, whose films include *Breaking the Waves*, *The Idiots* and, most recently, *Dancer in the Dark*. Members of Dogma 95 all swear by the group's "Vow of Chastity." Purity, to them, means no artificial lighting, only handheld cameras, no emotionally calculated sound tracks, no historical settings, no guns and no self-referential gestures to identifiable film genres (e.g., film noir is verboten). Sure, it sounds pretentious. But it makes for

Whether you're going for lust in the tub à la *American Beauty* or a *Blair Witch* close-up, the 16x optical zoom on JVC's GR-DVF31 CyberCam ($1200) will capture the shot.

With a little digital technology and the few thousand it takes to own a camcorder and computer editing system, you can make professional-quality movies.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY RICHARD FEGLEY

DV Essentials

sony pc100

imac dv special edition

vst ultraslim firewire drives

compaq 5700t pc

compaq flat-panel monitor

go-video dual-deck vcr

Pictured from top to bottom is all the hardware you need to create a Sundance-ready film on the cheap. Sony PC100: This pocket-size, megapixel digital camcorder shoots broadcast quality video (up to 520 lines of resolution) via a 10x optical zoom. Price: $2200. Apple iMac DV Special Edition: Apple's newest iMac, a PowerPC G3 machine, has preinstalled editing software and a 13-gig hard drive. The iMac's Firewire ports make it easy to add extra storage, which you'll need as you become more ambitious. Price: $1500. VST Firewire hard drives: These stackable storage devices come in eight-, ten- and 14-gigabyte increments. Price: $536 to $850 each. Compaq Presario 5700T-700: The $3794 5700T is a Pentium III Powerhouse with gobs of RAM and a 54-gigabyte hard drive (upgradable to 72 gigs). It also includes DVD and rewritable CD-ROM drives, excellent multimedia speakers and a flat-panel monitor. Go-Videe DDV9550 daal-deck VCR: Make a VHS copy of your movie on one deck of the four-head, hi-fi model and dubs on the other. Price: $450.

powerful films that rely on characters and settings more than on visual effects.

Judging by her Hollywood features, director Penelope Spheeris would seem to be all that Dogma 95 abhors. Spheeris began as a director of documentaries. Her *Decline of Western Civilization*, parts one through three, begun in 1981, are gritty chronicles of the violent reaches of rock music and punk culture. But when she was tapped to direct *Wayne's World*, her career went mainstream. Spheeris subsequently directed *The Beverly Hillbillies*. "I asked what they were paying for *Beverly Hillbillies*," Spheeris remembers, "and they said $2 million. I told them, 'I guess I'll have that baby.'" Later came *The Little Rascals* for millions more, but eventually Spheeris returned to documentaries, her first love. She couldn't get a studio to provide financial backing but she did it anyway, thanks to digital video.

"I can shoot with a camcorder that costs a fraction of what a film camera costs," she says, "and without all the help that goes with film." Spheeris' latest project, due out this spring, is a film of Ozzfest, the summerlong heavy-metal carnival that has grown into the biggest rock concert tour in the world. Spheeris captured it all digitally with a small crew. "It would have taken 70 people to get the tour on film. It took seven of us to get in on video."

Another advantage of going digital? It will be easier to distribute your movie to the masses. Currently, theaters rely on the delivery of physical film. Down the road, getting a movie to the local multiplex will just be a matter of downloading it off a computer network, such as the web, onto a projector's hard drive. Or directly to a computer-driven screen at home.

Whether you seek worldwide recognition or just plan to entertain family, friends and lovers, digital video offers the most possibilities for the least cash. Ramping up on new technology is always tricky—tools become obsolete as soon as you buy them. This year, however, digital video is sufficiently standardized that buying into the trend will guarantee your equipment has a fairly long run. Here's how to assemble a system for shooting, editing and distributing movies on your own.

THE CAMCORDER

Digital video camcorders cost between $700 and $4500. The good news? Those on the low end produce surprisingly sharp video. Like their high-end kin, the less expensive models provide video resolution about twice as good as broadcast television. The camcorders that begin around $1500 distinguish themselves by capturing warmer, more vibrant colors and working well in low-light situations. They also capture good still pictures (either onto tape or on some form of removable memory).

The quality of a DV camcorder's picture depends on several factors. First, the lens. Camcorder lenses seem to promise a lot, with zooms advertised to blow up distant subjects 150 times their size. Don't be deceived. There are in fact two kinds of zooms on camcorders: optical and digital. Only the optical variation matters, and in DV camcorders optical zooms rarely exceed 16x. Digital zooms usually kick in after the optical zoom is at full extension, but they enlarge only what the optical lenses capture by blowing up the pixels. So digitally zoomed images distort badly in short order.

(continued on page 153)

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 159.

"I can hardly wait for the sequel."

Cindy Margolis

the queen of the net on maximizing assets, saving lives and getting naked on the price is right

Cindy Margolis, a bodacious, blonde 32-year-old Los Angeles native, is busting out everywhere. First and foremost, Margolis appears 24-7-365 (or is it 36-24-36?) on her website: cindymargolis.com. There, with her repertoire of emoticons and perky repartee, she sidles up to her 60 million loyal cyberbuddies (59 percent male) with a diary of her doings in Celebrityville and an endless supply of cheesecake shots that, according to the Guinness Book of World Records, have made her the most downloaded woman on the Internet for four years running. Just this past fall, Margolis appeared on Suddenly Susan, Shasta McNasty, a WWF Smackdown and in the first of six E Channel specials called In Your Dreams With Cindy Margolis, in which she makes selected cyberbuddies' dreams come true. In August she'll have her own syndicated talk show. There's more: Margolis has been named one of Forbes' One-Year Wonders and one of People magazine's 50 Most Beautiful People. Best of all, Margolis has let none of this go to her head. Sure, she's a bikini-clad role model fantasy for business school graduates everywhere, but Margolis is also genuine and sweet. She has never posed nude—not ever—and has gone so far as to file lawsuits against web operators who paste her head on naked bodies and claim that it's Cindy in the buff to lure unsuspecting surfers to their sites.

We asked Contributing Editor David Rensin—OK, he asked us—to meet the world's most downloaded woman and tell us what the fuss is about. Rensin says: "Cindy is smart and saucy and makes any clothing look good. We met at her house and talked in her living room. Then she took me on a tour that included the bedroom she shares with her husband, Guy, and the baskets in which she keeps her underwear and bathing suits. Finally, she showed me a room filled with Cindy memorabilia and the 100 posters she has done. It's her husband's shrine to her."

1

PLAYBOY: More people have downloaded your Internet pictures than anyone else's. Why do so many want whatever you've got?

MARGOLIS: I'm the girl next door. I convey a healthy, sexy lifestyle. I'm confident. I'm also one of the first Internet celebrities. I was born there. Even though I was America's number one pin-up girl—my posters have sold millions—most people still didn't know me. Then *Extra* put some of my pictures on AOL to promote a show I was on and the response was more than anyone could have imagined. Soon I started my own site, cindymargolis.com, which is free. I feel like a pioneer, especially for women. When I first got on the web 80 percent of the people online were men. Now it's 50-50. I'm in the *Guinness Book of World Records*, and I didn't have to eat a hundred goldfish to make it.

2

PLAYBOY: You draw the line at posing nude. Is that a moral imperative or a commercial consideration?

MARGOLIS: I have nothing against nudity. If I ever do it, it will be for PLAYBOY. Or in a movie with Brad Pitt or Tom Cruise. I'm not picky. I never say never. Right now it's a personal choice. I think mystery is better—I can be a lot sexier with clothes on. I always hear, "Everyone has done it. Why don't you do it?" Exactly. Everyone has done it, so why do I need to?

3

PLAYBOY: We understand you got your start posing for greeting cards. What sentiments were you selling?

MARGOLIS: I started my own greeting card company when I was in high school. My mom and I thought it was cool to use sexy, fun sayings. On one card I posed in a cat outfit. It was so cute. At first—you're not going to believe this—it read: "Have a little pussy on your birthday." Oh my God [*laughs*]. Then my mom and I changed it to: "Have a little tail on your birthday." At the time I didn't know what that meant. I do now. On another card I wore a black corset. I was only 18, mind you, yet there I was saying something like, "Am I horny?" Well, something with "horny" in it. I also had my home phone number on the back. I was so naive.

4

PLAYBOY: You've said your body developed early. What are the challenges of looking older than your years?

MARGOLIS: When I was in sixth grade I had high school boys trying—unsuccessfully—to pick up on me. Then I went to a private high school for my senior year. The teachers were mostly in their 20s. Once, after the female teachers had had a meeting about me, they called in my parents, sat us down and said I should not wear makeup to school because it—no, *I*—was distracting. What they meant was "distracting to the *men* teachers." But makeup, to me, is just everything, so I refused. But I agreed to cover up the rest of me. It makes me laugh now when I look at the old pictures—I guess I really did wear sexy things. Some of my dresses were so tight, sort of like Ally McBeal's dresses. But with me there was a big difference—I would walk two steps and then have to pull them down because the stretchy fabric would ride up my butt. The teachers had every right to complain.

5

PLAYBOY: Define "sex symbol."

MARGOLIS: In Raquel Welch's time it was a stereotype based on the size of your breasts and the notion that the bigger your chest, the smaller your brain. It was completely Hollywood. When I watched Raquel's biography on A&E, I could *(continued on page 138)*

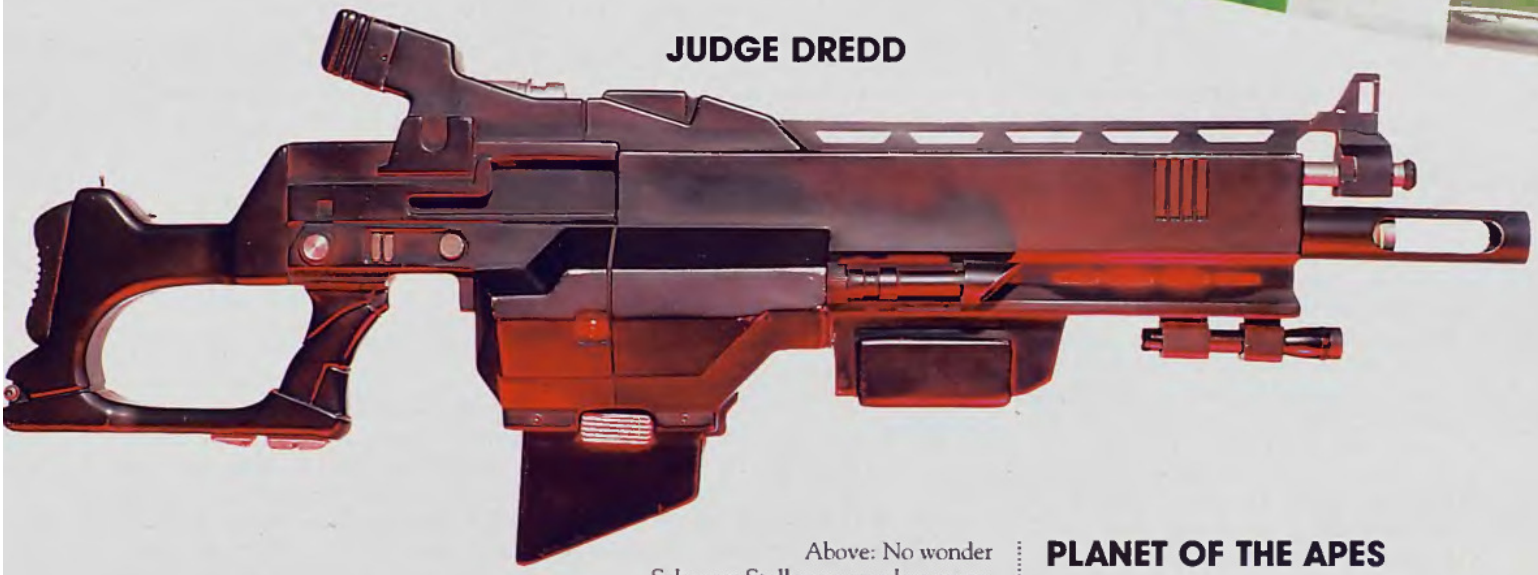
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEFF DUNAS

TOP GUNS

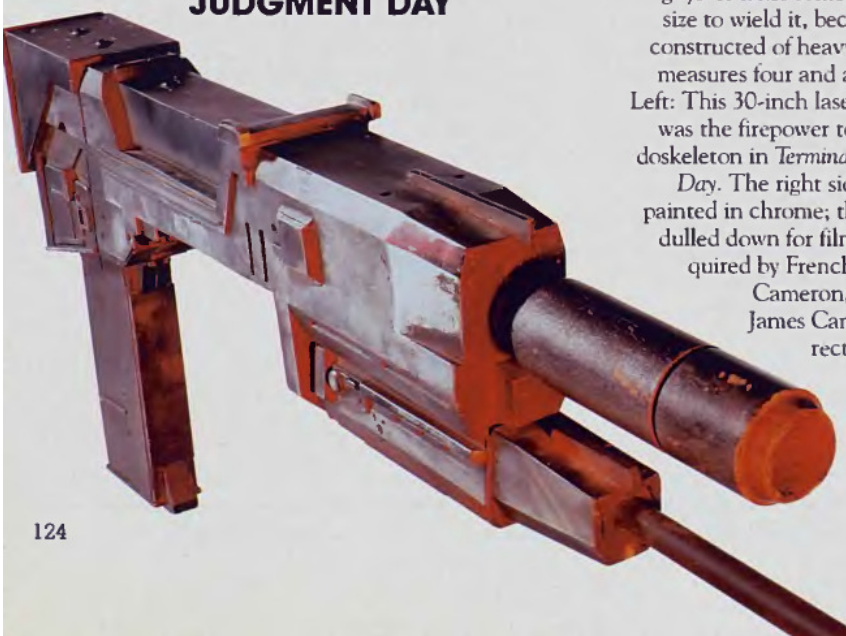
science fiction movie and tv prop guns are a blast from the past

Without his Judge Hunter rifle, Sylvester Stallone would have been Judge Dead instead of Judge Dredd, and a Rail Gun was the only thing that kept Arnold Schwarzenegger from being erased in *Eraser*. Science fiction movie props are coveted by collectors, and for good reason—they're really neat shit. Who wouldn't want to own the laser machine gun toted by the endoskeleton in *Terminator 2*, or a working Rebel Blaster from *Star Wars*? Surprisingly, the world's largest collection of science fiction prop guns isn't in the Smithsonian. It's owned by Hollywood singer-songwriter Fuller French, and the guns featured here are just a sample of his intergalactic arsenal. French's first purchase, in 1991, was a Draconian pistol used in the TV series *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century*. His space armory now holds about 350 weapons, from the rifle featured in Falcon Films' *Alien Escape* to a bizarre laser gun from the TV show *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*. On these pages are six of French's finest shooters, each of which is worth many thousands of dollars (the entire collection is valued at $5 million). French's fantasy firearms may go on a national tour, become a permanent attraction in a Las Vegas hotel or be auctioned online. He'll even sell the collection in toto if the price is right. Meanwhile, French is featured on a Cabana Records album titled *Fuller Centric: Welcome to My World*, which is about to be released.

JUDGE DREDD



TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY



PLANET OF THE APES

Above: No wonder Sylvester Stallone never lost an argument in *Judge Dredd*. Just the sight of his Judge Hunter rifle probably scared the bejesus out of the bad guys. It takes somebody Stallone's size to wield it, because the gun is constructed of heavy fiberglass and measures four and a half feet long. Left: This 30-inch laser machine gun was the firepower toted by the endoskeleton in *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*. The right side of the gun is painted in chrome; the left side was dulled down for filming. It was acquired by French from Michael Cameron, the brother of James Cameron (who directed the movie).

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES IMBROGNO

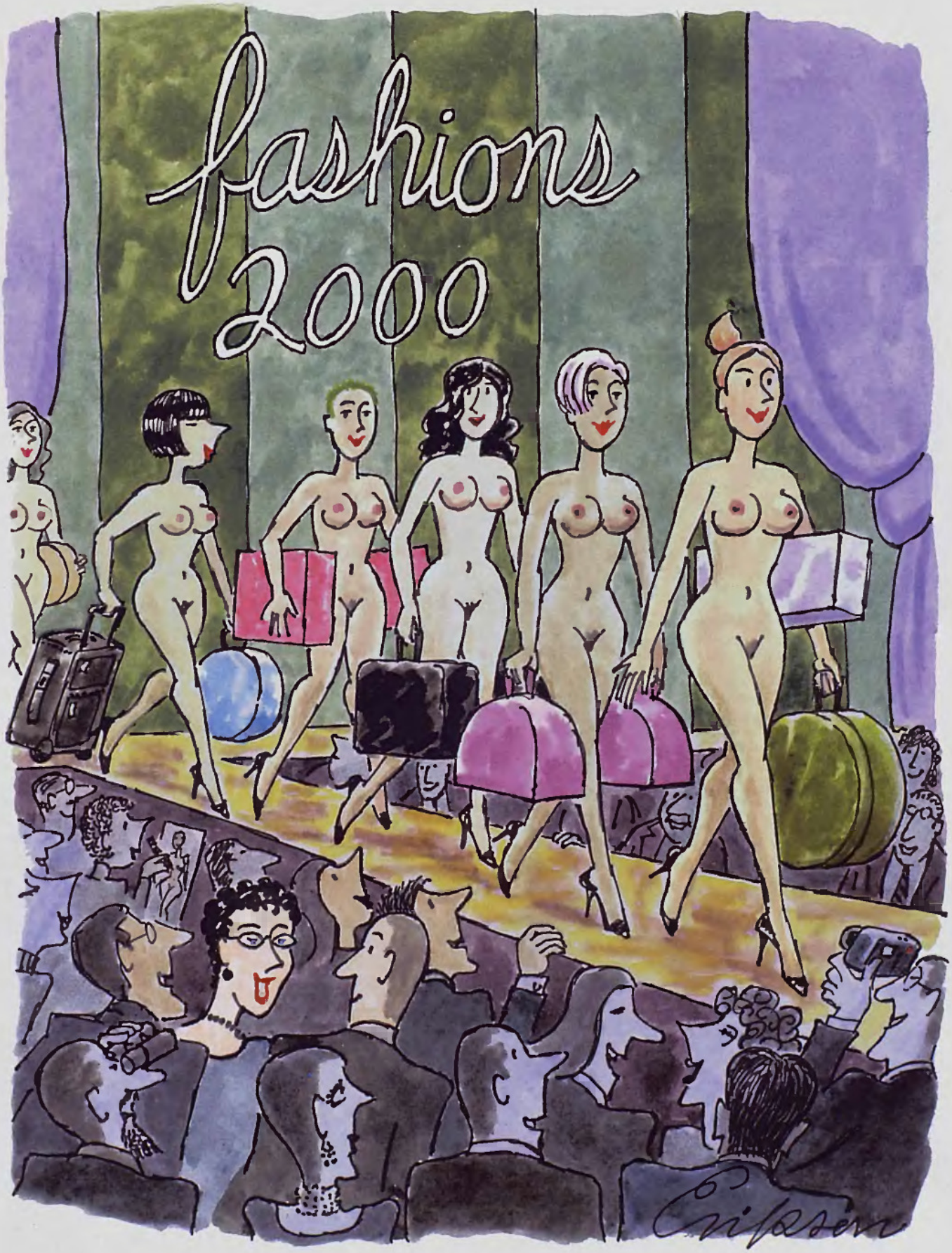
MEN IN BLACK

Above: This handmade machined metal pistol appears in a number of scenes in *Men in Black*. Its many lights include one that illuminates the strange glass egg at the gun's base. The egg contains a liquid and what appears to be seaweed. Left: The only working gun in existence from the film *Eraser* weighs 30 pounds and is five feet long. No wonder Schwarzenegger is rumored to have dropped it every time the director yelled "cut."

ERASER

Left: French says this rifle, carried by Charlton Heston in *Planet of the Apes*, is possibly the only one that remains in its original condition, and he considers it one of the most important science fiction weapon props ever made. The weapon was constructed of two machined wooden shells that once encased a working World War II carbine. Because wooden guns break quickly when fired, the rifles for the *Planet* sequels were crafted of molded aluminum. Right: This 18-inch working Rebel Blaster was used throughout *Star Wars* and later in *Return of the Jedi*. It's an exceedingly rare piece and the only one known to exist outside Lucasfilm's archives. French says that while Rebel Blasters were identical in appearance, each was unique in construction. A trigger operated its electronics, some of which have been removed.

STAR WARS



"They get dressed on the runway. It's kinkier that way."

City Girls

do real girls talk about sex the way they do on *sex and the city?*

see for yourself

EPISODE 2: sticky fingers

By AMY SOHN

When the Seventies girl posse got together again at Lot 61 (we're creatures of habit, what can I say?), everyone wanted to dish the dirt on dirty guys. Then someone brought up waxing and a new ball-shaving trend, and we got all lathered up about it. And we couldn't stop talking about giving head. I guess you could say we had guys on the brain—not that there's anything wrong with that.

Pepper: Do guys ever put their fingers in you without washing their hands first?

Gloria: All the time.

Barbara: I've never made someone go wash his hands.

Pepper: If you have a guy who takes the subway and then comes over to your house, you might as well inject yourself with TB.

Barbara: This is something I've never considered.

Pepper: Well, consider it. I mean it. You have to be really careful of this stuff. I don't know how you can get turned on by someone if you think there are germs on his hands.

Flo: You live in an everyday environment, you're going to get germs one way or another.

Pepper: So you've never made a guy put Purell on his penis? I'm kidding.

Gloria: How do you ask a guy to wash without him thinking you're a germ freak?

Pepper: Well, first I say, "Have you washed your hands?" Then he says yes or no. If he lies I say, "You haven't, so go wash them."

Barbara: See, I think this could be cute.

Pepper: Then he washes his hands, he comes back and I can tell if he's lied by smelling his fingers. Then I start kissing his hands. You guys are telling me that if a guy has a choice between washing his hands and having a naked woman in front of him, or not washing his hands and having nothing——

Gloria: But if you're in the heat of it and you've been making out for 15 minutes and then you ask him to wash his hands, won't the guy be like, "Hello? Our vibe? We're in the middle of something?"

Pepper: So I say, "Wash your hands and we'll get back into it."

Gloria: I bet you're a spitter.

Pepper: Oh yeah.

Barbara: Most of the guys I've been with tell me when they're about to come, or they grab my head or put their hand there so I can stop. It's like a courtesy thing.

Flo: That's so sweet.

Pepper: I let the guy know ahead of time that he can come in my mouth. Then when he does, I get up, go to the bathroom and spit it out in the toilet. But I never know if it's rude to flush.

Gloria: I'd rather flush than leave it there. Otherwise he goes to take a pee and he sees it in the water!

[*Pepper makes gagging noise.*]

Gloria: You asked!

Flo: I am so grossed out right now. Goddamn. I can talk about any bodily fluid except come. Eew!

Barbara: I'm feeling a little gagging sensation, too.

Flo: Speaking of gagging, what about 69?

Gloria: I need to be doing one or the other, either relaxed enough that all I'm thinking about is getting, or really focused on giving. Plus when I'm crouched over him in 69, I'm self-conscious about having my ass in his face.

Pepper: That's a problem.

Gloria: He's thrusting up at me with his dick, which makes me feel like I don't have enough control over it.

Flo: I'm with you on that one. I'd like to know who invented 69. This past weekend I had a crick in my neck, so I was lying on my bed face down with my head hanging off the bed. He says, "Turn over." So I'm looking up at him and he's massaging the base of my neck. One thing leads to another, and he undoes his pants. He's standing at the side of the bed and I'm lying down. So I give him suck-the-ball action. Then he crawls over me and starts doing 69. It's so distracting.

Gloria: It was distracting because you were lying down and someone was thrusting a dick in your mouth. I don't think they realize how intense it is to have a hard penis in your mouth.

Pepper: [*Knowingly*] They realize.

Gloria: No they don't.

Pepper: Yes they do.

Flo: It can hurt the back of your throat.

Pepper: See, I always do it so that I'm in control.

Gloria: Haven't you been with guys who want you to do it as you're lying on your back?

Pepper: Yeah, but I don't let them do that. That's punishment. They don't get to do that. Part of the whole thing of giving a blow job is that you have to enjoy giving it. If you're not enjoying it, and you're too busy worrying about choking to death, they're not going to get off.

Gloria: You'd be surprised.

Barbara: I've never had a successful 69 experience.

Flo: I haven't either.

Gloria: I'd rather jerk off while giving head.

Pepper: Wait, wait. How did you get so multitask? You've got one hand on his penis——

Flo: How many hands do you have?

Gloria: You don't need a hand to give head.

Flo: I use a hand. One hand on the balls, one hand here [*mimes jerking the base of the penis*], *(continued on page 168)*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLY CAMDEN

CAPRICE

europe's blonde bombshell makes her stateside debut

"I've done risqué pictures in all the lads' magazines," Caprice says, "but I haven't exposed anything." Until now. "Americans don't know me like Europeans do. I have credibility in Europe and I've made a lot of money. Going to the next level is difficult. To be introduced in America with nothing on is a bit daunting. But appearing in PLAYBOY is a great business move. Everyone who's anyone has done it."

CAPRICE BOURRET. Try to say it without puckering your kisser. In Europe, Caprice is a household name, a renowned pin-up girl who beckons wide-eyed men from the covers of British *GQ*, *Maxim* and *Esquire*. Ask an American about Caprice, and he will probably picture a slick Chevrolet with cherries on top. But that's about to change. This is Caprice's major debut in the United States, and as Europeans know, she makes a great first impression. Take, for example, the time she showed up at the National Television Awards: "There were 50 paparazzi waiting, and I stepped out of the car wearing a see-through Versace gown. You could see every inch of my body. Everyone thought they had died and gone to heaven. The next day I was on the front page of every newspaper." Versace may be the clothing line that launched a thousand careers (we're still mindful of that barely-there safety pin number Elizabeth Hurley wore to the premiere of *Four Weddings and a Funeral*), but Caprice insists her fashion statement was not premeditated. "It just happened," she says. "I was going to wear a short pink dress, but at the last minute I decided it wasn't for me. My publicist called Versace, and of one of the three gowns they sent over, I said, 'Holy shit, this is the it.'" Caprice's overnight fame spawned a slew of prominent gigs, including a television show, *Caprice's Travels*. She has since given up modeling (save a certain PLAYBOY layout) to focus on her music career. "Modeling was about making as much

money as possible and getting out. With singing, I'm not motivated by money. For the first time in my life I have a passion and love for my work."

Q: There's a website called Caprice for President. Would you make a good politician?

A: [*Laughs*] I'd be shit! I'm not a good liar.

Q: Your music has been compared to Madonna's. Fair?

A: My voice sounds like Madonna–Blondie. It has a lush, mature tone.

Q: What's in your CD player?

A: The Chemical Brothers, the Cardigans. You're going to think I'm mad, but AC/DC's *Back in Black* is in there. I'm a rocker at heart.

Q: What inspires your lyrics?

A: This album is about painful relationships. Everyone can relate to the songs. We've all been dumped and hurt or had to break up with someone.

Q: Is there a special person in your life now?

A: I'm dating. I'm looking. I'm patient.

Q: The tabloids have linked you to Matthew McConaughey and Rod Stewart. Does the attention bother you?

A: What are you going to do, lock yourself in a closet? If you can't take showing up in the tabloids, get out of the business.

Q: Now that you're famous, is it hard to meet men?

A: [*Laughs*] Are you kidding? It's brilliant! If you fancy someone who already knows of you, you can have your assistant call him and say, "Do you want to have a drink with Caprice?"

Q: Does that happen often?

A: Yeah!

Q: Name any names?

A: I couldn't do that.

Q: Does a normal guy have a shot at going out with you?

A: I've gone out with a trillion normal guys. All I want is a best friend. He has to make me laugh.

Q: Any personal flaws?

A: I forget to flush the toilet now and again. I wear socks to bed, which bugs the hell out of my boyfriends, especially if I'm wearing sexy lingerie. And my driving is horrendous.

Q: How will you celebrate when this issue hits?

A: My record label is going to throw a big party for me. It will be a celebration for my album and PLAYBOY.

Cindy Margolis *(continued from page 123)*

I play this computer genius, but I'm not. People say, "My computer froze." I say, "Get it a sweater."

tell that she hated that, but it was too hard to get out of. Now, being a sex symbol is something that you can be proud of: You're sexy, confident, smart, competent. And your look can be anything that someone else considers attractive. There's nothing wrong with using your physical attributes to get started. Most women in the business do. But most also have more than just their looks and they want to grow. Now maybe we have that chance.

6

PLAYBOY: You're a self-made woman. Give us your rules for success.

MARGOLIS: Get noticed. Use your brain. Nothing is more important than eye contact and a great smile. There are a million beautiful girls who get off the bus every day who are prettier and smarter. Use your mind creatively. You have to be out of the ordinary.

7

PLAYBOY: Explain your online investment strategy.

MARGOLIS: I invested in America Online, but my overall goal is not to invest but to be invested in. I want to take my company public. I remember when I was in *Forbes*, as a one-year wonder. I said, "Why now? Wait until I go public. You'll dedicate a whole issue to me." If anyone can ride the Internet wave it should be me. I'm working on that now. I'll need good partners; I can't just traipse over to Wall Street by myself. Someone's got to put together the revenue model and all that stuff, which is boring. I want to get into e-commerce with a Cindy Mall. I want to have a lifestyle section and a celebrity section. My millennium calendar is out, and I'll also have Cindy products like mouse pads and computer accessories. But it's much broader than that. I want to be an Internet portal. I mean, if you're going to go online to shop, why not do it at my site? I'll offer the best deals. And I also want to have live, streaming celebrity interviews. Fashion shows. My own swimwear and lingerie line. It's going to be exciting, and I believe I can actually do it because I've got the eyeballs—the traffic at my site—to make it happen. I have 60 million fans I call cyberbuddies. Another good thing: When you go to Amazon.com or wherever, you don't know who you're interacting with. I'm an actual person. I can generate millions of dollars' worth of publicity because I can go on shows and promote things. And I answer my e-mail.

8

PLAYBOY: What common misconceptions shared by your cyberbuddies would you like to clear up right now?

MARGOLIS: That I sit at my computer e-mailing in my lingerie. The computer and e-mail part is true, but at three A.M. I'm in pajamas and flip-flops, or a T-shirt, with my hair up. People also think I get off-color e-mail because it's basically anonymous, but that's rare. Maybe, just for the hell of it, someone should occasionally tell me they're doing *something* while looking at my pictures. Just let me know! [*Laughs*] I love getting e-mail. My time's no more precious than my cyberbuddies' and I appreciate their taking the time to write.

9

PLAYBOY: Cybersex: good or bad?

MARGOLIS: Definitely good. But I've never done it, because I hear you have to type with one hand. That leaves me out because I hunt and peck.

10

PLAYBOY: What do you see when you look inside your computer? With what knowledge can you dazzle your nonwired friends?

MARGOLIS: I've looked inside when the repairman is working. Otherwise, I'm like a TV doctor: I play this computer-savvy genius, but I'm really not. People say, "Help. My computer froze." I say, "Get it a sweater."

11

PLAYBOY: In August you will graduate from the world wide web to television when your syndicated talk show debuts. How will it stand out from the pack?

MARGOLIS: First of all, it has me. And it will be hooked up interactively with my website. We did the pilot in Miami, on the beach at night. How often has that been done? The best way to describe it is like *Ricki Lake* but with young, good-looking, hip guests, and no weird, trashy topics. We do things like "Teach Me How to Be Sexy" and "You're Not Wearing *That* to the Beach" and "Marry Me or Else." My favorite is "Obsessed Fan." It's based on my biggest website fan. He's always first in my online chats. He e-mails me every day. He has all my posters hanging in his house, some in his bedroom. His girlfriend finally got jealous—I didn't even know he had a girlfriend. We brought them on the show. At first she didn't like me. To her I was the perfect poster on the wall while she woke up next to him with her hair a mess and crust in her eyes. I told her I'm like that, too, and said, "Still, you have every right to be mad. I'd be mad." Then I told her boyfriend, "You've got to stop spending time on my site. Come on." That won her over. Finally, she said he could have my posters in the garage but not in the bedroom. I said, "I'm married, so you're never going to have a chance with me. But you have a beautiful real-live girl here. We can stay cyberbuddies, but get a life or she's going to leave you." Then all of a sudden he proposed to her. That was a complete surprise to me—and a huge relief that she accepted.

12

PLAYBOY: When you and a girlfriend appeared on Howard Stern's radio/TV show, stripped down to your underwear and poured water on your T-shirts, he got his highest rating ever. How does Howard get so many fabulous women to do so many outlandish things?

MARGOLIS: Howard's a charmer, a sweet-talker and a great friend. When we got there he said, "We're playing a strip game! Every time you lose you have to take off something." At first I didn't want to, but Howard said to the audience, "Oh, Cindy thinks logically. She's not just going to play the game. I have to do something for her." I said, "Howard, there's nothing you can do. I don't mind appearing in a swimsuit because I made my career posing in them, but stripping is not me." Then Howard said to the audience, "Cindy thinks in dollars and cents. So this is what we'll do: Cindy, if you play this game I will promote you, your website, whatever you want, every 15 minutes for the rest of the day and the rest of the week. You can call in any time and I'll put you on. You can say anything you want." I probably shouldn't have said OK, but I have this excuse: *Details* magazine had named me one of its ten sexiest women of the year. I was thrilled. I went to New York to do the party and I took my girlfriend because she lives in town. The party was over at two in the morning, which is way past my bedtime, and I had to be at Howard's show at four in the morning. I don't drink coffee, but maybe because I

"Let me get back to you, C.J.—we're in the middle of downloading some pretty urgent material here."

was on that wonderful high of having had a great time and getting the red carpet treatment, I decided to stay up. I guess my brain wasn't functioning clearly. I said OK because I figured you can't see anything on the radio, and not much more on TV. But as we were pouring water on our T-shirts I was thinking, What the hell am I doing? I also gave Howard a kiss, which I'm not supposed to do. Fortunately, it wasn't only me. Howard was in his underwear. Robin showed her bra: She's never done that before, so that was a huge thing for the audience. Baba Booey was in his underwear, too. Now the show has rerun like 27 times. It's part of what made CBS sit up and notice me for my own show.

13

PLAYBOY: Some sociologists believe that the expression of cultural-economic power in the first half of this century resided mostly with WASPs, and that in the second half the Jews had it. You're Jewish. Care to comment?

MARGOLIS: Not really, but I did play the Jewish card with Howard Stern the first time I went on. I knew he was going to give me a hard time, so I wore a bikini top and pants. I didn't even put on the full bikini, which I do on shows all the time. When I walked in he said, "Oh, I'd like to bang you!" He tried so hard. I said, "Howard, I'm looking for a nice Jewish boy." When I said Jewish, he all of a sudden turned nice. Everyone in the studio thought, God, Howard's like putty in her hands. He saw me differently. Apparently so did whoever was listening. I got so many marriage proposals, even from rabbis. I also made a Jerusalem newspaper.

14

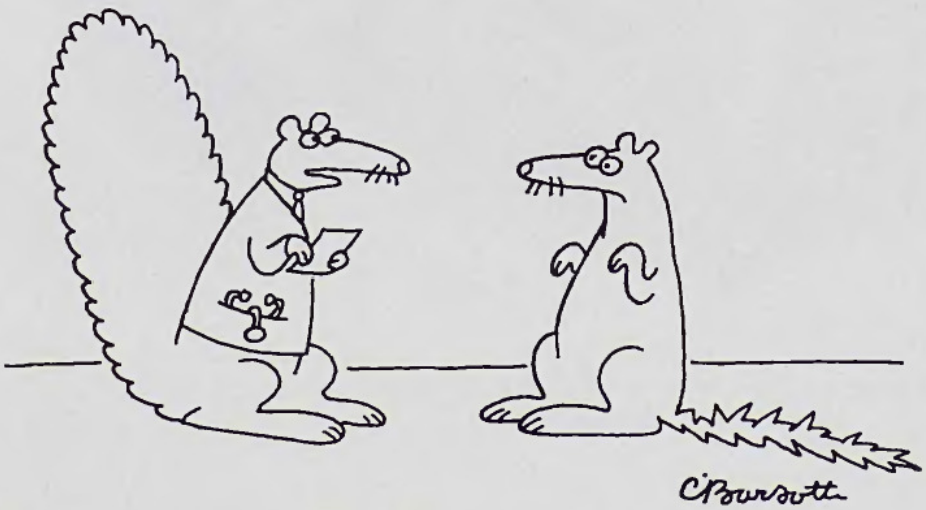
PLAYBOY: Then you married a nice Jewish boy named Guy. How did you know Guy was the guy for you?

MARGOLIS: He knew my former manager and wanted to meet me, but I said no to a date about nine times. I'd just gotten out of a relationship. Then one day I had to sign something at the office, and my manager suggested we go to lunch afterward. When we pulled up in front of Jerry's Deli—which Guy owns—I said, "I will kill you if that guy Guy is here! If he is, I'm not going in!" My manager said, "Cindy, he's not going to be there. This is the closest restaurant and we're on a schedule." So we go in and, of course, Guy was there. [*Pauses*] I liked him immediately. Afterward, he walked us to the car. But he didn't ask for my number or anything. Then I figured, "God, after all that and he didn't even like me." I kept asking my manager, "Did he ask for my number?" He'd say, "No, but I'm sure he will." Four days later I got a message that Guy had called. That was really smart of him. It got me interested. Our first date didn't go so well, but our second date was a Lakers game, and I'm a huge Lakers fan. He has season tickets. After that, I saw him every single day. Later I found out that Guy had been looking for a nice Jewish girl.

15

PLAYBOY: What kind of behavior or procedures that are perfectly OK in a restaurant kitchen would you not tolerate in your kitchen at home?

MARGOLIS: Everything, because I don't tolerate cooking in my house. That's right: I don't cook. I don't even know what that thing with the burners is called. I supposedly have a good refrigerator, but there's only water and Diet Coke in it. It's pathetic. My husband likes fresh food and no leftovers. I think food tastes better the second day. To compromise we just order in and toss what we don't eat.



"The tests are back—you're bright eyed but not bushy tailed."

16

PLAYBOY: What's in the top left drawer of your dresser?

MARGOLIS: I don't have a dresser. My husband has a walk-in closet in which he's let me put a bit of stuff. I have an underwear basket, a swimwear basket, a lingerie basket, a bra basket. I wear my husband's socks, so I don't have a sock basket. [*Cindy takes me upstairs to the bedroom and shows me.*] I have a closet in the guest bedroom and a little closet in the bathroom. My clothes are all over the place. Guy gets the closet because he is the woman in our relationship. He will kill me for saying that, but he just has better taste than I do. He loves to shop. He wears suits and white shirts to work. He picks out all my clothes. Obviously, my wardrobe is minimal.

17

PLAYBOY: Bikini waxes: Have they gone too far? Is pubic minimalism here to stay? Should men follow suit?

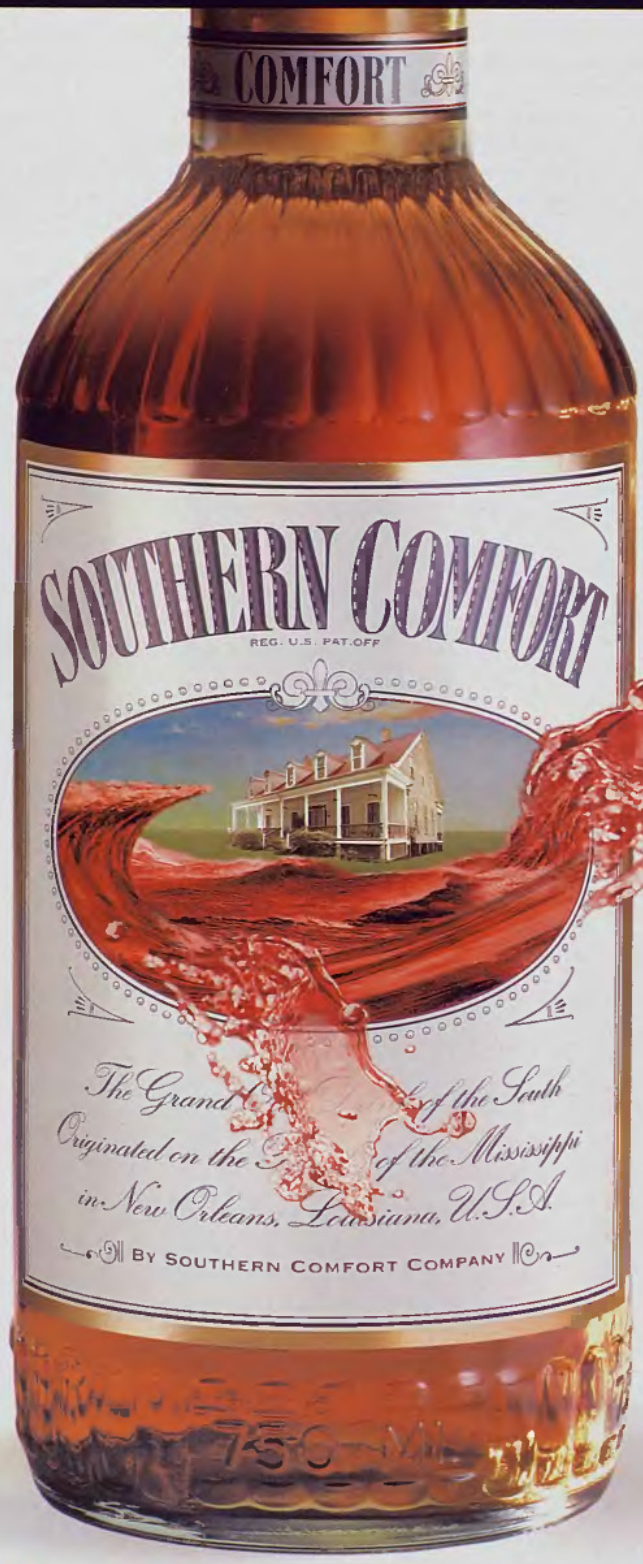
MARGOLIS: To answer the last question first: Yes. Men should definitely follow suit. Pubic hair is an important thing, and you have to take care of it. It has to be groomed. It's part of your body. You shave your legs every day, you wash your hair; why leave out that little area? How you do it is your choice, but women can't just let it run wild anymore. This isn't the Sixties. A trimming service should be offered in more salons. A lightning bolt would be a good design. Or your initials. I think it wouldn't be hard to do a C. And a G might be a little hard. M would be tough. But a C would be pretty easy. I think bare is cool, though it's hard to maintain. So just do bare for special occasions like on a date night.

18

PLAYBOY: You worked on *The Price Is Right*. Give us the short course on the fine art of game-show hand gestures. Who teaches you the tricks? Is there a display you wanted to work with but didn't get the chance?

MARGOLIS: It's more difficult than you think. Two hands from the hips to a flip, ending with the palms upward, is the grand gesture. It's used for boats and cars and anything over $10,000. Smaller items—cups, toasters, etc.—are handheld. The camera pulls in for a close-up of your face, smiling, then the item you're holding. There's also the hand gesture for medium-priced stuff. I got to do most everything, including the items for which you wear only a towel. Unfortunately, I lost my towel. Because everything's live, you're running for your next move, there are things flying around and my towel got hooked on something. I was exposed. That'll probably be the one nude video that will turn up somewhere: Cindy naked on *The*

How do you ride the new wave?



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Price Is Right. Oh, and once, I came out in a swimsuit just as someone in the audience had a seizure, and forever after I was teased about having caused it.

19

PLAYBOY: On the other hand, it's rumored that one of your posters brought a dying young fan back to life *and* complete health. Explain.

MARGOLIS: I take no credit for that. This poor little guy, Tommy, 13 years old, in Michigan, was deathly ill. He lived in a small town. They had to airlift him to a hospital in Detroit. He was hooked up to all these machines. They brought in specialists. They couldn't figure out what was wrong with him. The only thing left to try was a procedure to rejuvenate his blood, but even that only gave him a five percent chance of living. It was around Christmas and the doctor told his family, "You really should stay at his bedside." He also asked them to bring some of the boy's favorite things from home. One was my poster. The kid had saved up his allowance to buy it. Because 13 in a small Michigan town is not like 13 in LA, his mom had given him a really hard time about it. But they brought the poster to the hospital and stuck it on his oxygen tank with surgical tape. He was in a rotating bed so if by chance he opened his eyes, he'd see me posing in a bikini. Miracle of miracles, the night my poster was hung above his bed he opened his eyes and was completely fine. It totally baffled the doctors. They started calling me Dr. Cindy around the hospital, bought a bunch of my posters and gave them to everyone in the ICU. The local news did a story.

The world found out about it because Joan Rivers saw the news story when she was in Detroit. She wanted to bring the boy and his family and me to New York. I had already gotten a tearjerker letter from his mom, Kathy, saying: "Thank you for saving my son," but I didn't know it was real until Joan called me. We all met for the first time on the show. Since then, we've become best friends. They're like my second family. His mom is my second mom. She's my webmaster. I see Tommy all the time. He comes to my shoots. He's like a young Steven Spielberg. Last year I went with him to his senior prom. He's six feet tall now. When we walked in, there were TV cameras everywhere. After that, all the girls were totally in love with him. Not only did I save his life, but five years later I think I helped him make it with the prom queen.

"I see we both like to protect wild life."

20

PLAYBOY: We always hear from beautiful women that the men who make them laugh get the gals. That seems false to us, possibly even destructive. When we think of Leo and Brad, do we also think of women laughing? Are you just trying to let men down easy?

MARGOLIS: I always say that if you can make me smile I'm yours. Looks are only good for the first month or two. There's that initial passion and stuff, but afterward what are you left with? When I was single I dated models and actors and, believe me, I cannot be with someone who spends more time than I do looking in the mirror. Of course, I have to be attracted to a man in the first place. Chemistry counts, but laughter is definitely something women respond to. I admit you sometimes think sex with the stud may be better. But once you've been there and done that, I think you can move on. All women have to have that stud guy in their life once, to try him out. But in the long run, the nice guys who make you laugh are going to win out. Nice guys do not finish last.

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fitness

(continued from page 44)

were simple if somewhat vague: Keep showing up. Focus on my practice. Have no fear.

Within two weeks of diligent work I found myself addicted to the physicality of the exercise and the gentle focus on the spirit. The primary series is composed of 35 moves that, like a gymnastics routine, keep you in constant motion—pushing up, backbending, handstanding, stretching into positions that develop dexterity and internal strength. And while it definitely hurts in peculiar and unexpected ways, the practice teaches that you are not your pain. My sore shoulders, knotted back and aching head (from standing upside down for three to five minutes) have yet to learn that lesson.

Somewhere toward the end of month one, when I was coming out of a headstand by crashing my legs to the floor, I was informed that I had it all wrong. "That's not yoga," explained the instructor, emphasizing that proper practice is rigorous yet gentle, less about achieving the pose than about breathing into each position to the extent of your ability. In fact, the more subtle your movements, the more expert you are. And if you don't get it right, there's usually an instructor nearby to step on your legs, kick your feet into the correct stance, press your chest to the floor and otherwise cajole you into position.

THE BENEFITS

Longer life. Better sleep. A balm for frazzled nerves. Particularly useful in healing sports injuries. Mark Blanchard, Los Angeles yogi to the stars, blew out his knees playing football and used yoga to recover. "Yoga uses your entire system to strengthen and lengthen and bring balance to your body," he says. "Ashtanga heals the body more quickly by delivering oxygen and blood to the injury in plentiful, rich quantities. It's so demanding and builds such enormous strength that it makes physical therapy look like a partial fix." While weight training makes you feel compacted, yoga makes you feel capacious. And because in one Ashtanga class I can burn more than 400 calories, my body looks trim and tight. Perhaps because I am stimulating my chakras (energy centers), peripheral benefits include cleared sinuses, less-blotchy skin and less stress. Some yogis also claim their sexual performance is enhanced (which could be an effect of lowered stress). Best of all, while yoga claims to unite you with God, it doesn't necessitate all sorts of ascetic deprivations. In fact, I find it pleasantly compatible with a glass of wine and the occasional smoke. Masochism merits its pleasures.

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Monkey Forest Road

(continued from page 100)

He spun out of Ubud and bounced along a narrow road up to a village called Penestanan. Wayan then led him along a maze-like path among the rice paddies. A couple of times he stepped off the path and sank up to his knees in the mud.

The old *balian* lived in a shack of sticks and mud. There was the faint glow of a kerosene light. When Sherm knocked, the old *balian* came to the door and started grinning away when he saw Sherm, who figured he was thinking: *Another Western sucker here to pay me to stop the rain.* The *balian* invited Sherm inside, where he tripped over a chicken. There were pigs in the hut too, running around with half a dozen naked kids. Sherm shined his flashlight on the wall on all these Balinese calendars and astrological charts. Then he saw his friend lying on a cot in the back in some sort of trance where he was just grinning away staring into space. Andrew slowly rolled his eyes upward as Sherm played the light near his face and repeated over and over how he wanted Sherm to understand that for the first time in his life he felt in harmony with all things.

Sherm didn't want to listen to this crazy shit, and got Andrew standing with a lot of cursing and dragged him out of the shack. The old *balian* just stood there grinning like an idiot while the pigs squealed underfoot. Sherm said that as he dragged him down the path, Andrew was totally out of his head and kept trying to explain to Sherm shit like how the *balian* had said things had gone wrong on the project *because we're out of touch with the spirits.*

Andrew Rouse was in his own world all the way back to Poppie's Guest House. Sherm said he kept trying to sing some goddamned Balinesian song, but knew only about three lines. Wayan tried to help him out, until Sherm told Wayan to knock it the hell off. Andrew stopped singing to announce to Sherm, as if it was supposed to be great news, that the *balian* had promised to come to Monkey Forest Road in the morning to seal off the site with energy lines and drive away the negative spirits. When they pulled up to Poppie's Guest House and Sherm turned off the jeep, Andrew Rouse jumped out and stripped off his clothes and said he was heading down to the river to pray to the goddess Rangda and added over his shoulder as he took off at a trot down the road, how his one wish now was that Sherm understand what was happening to him.

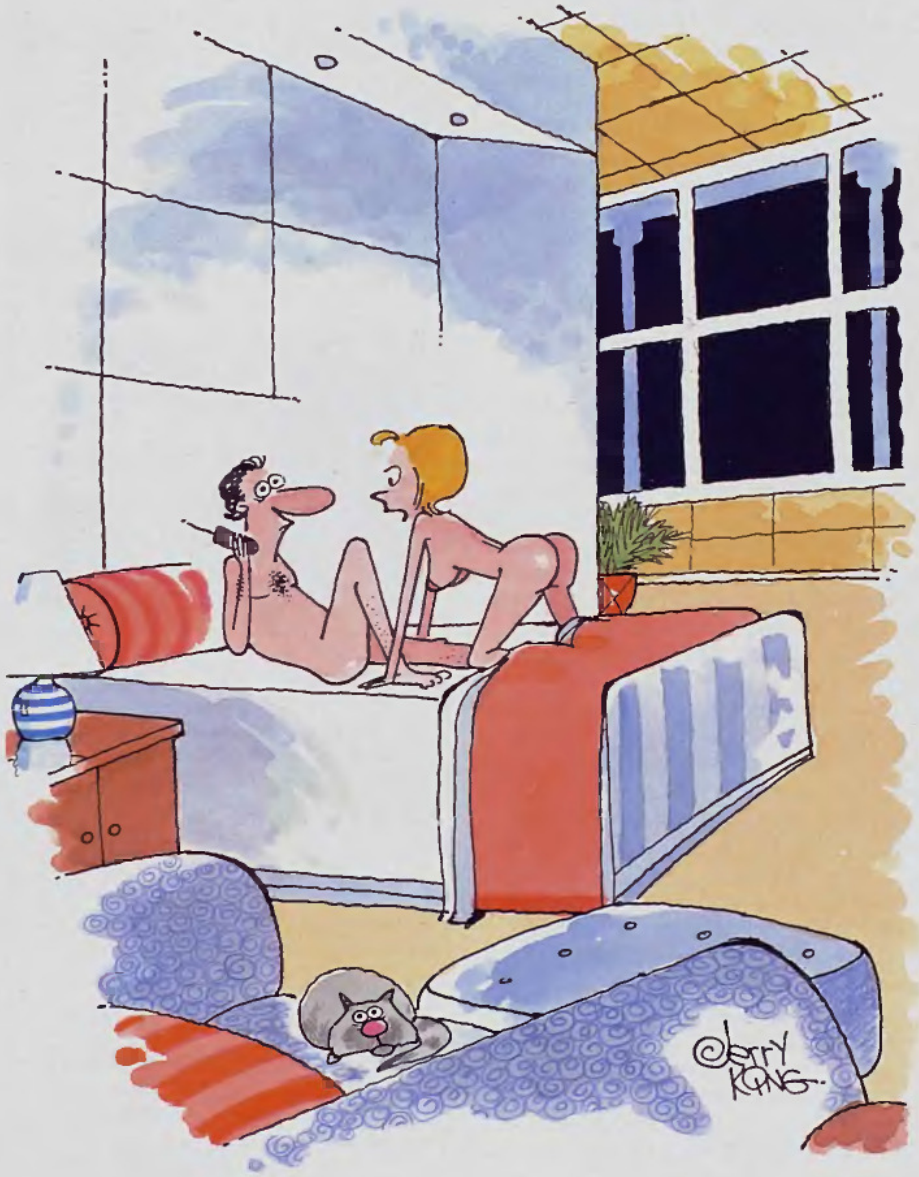
"Sherm understood!" yelled one of the engineers. "You've fucking gone local!"

"Bloody loco!" yelled another engineer, banging his shot glass on the bar for a refill. Soon all the engineers were banging on the bar with their shot glasses. When I shut my eyes it sounded strangely like my memories of a *kul-kul* drum in a distant banyan tree.

•

To the engineers that night in Rangoon, it was clearly time to ship Andrew Rouse home to Toronto. Heads nodded when Sherm said that the morning after Andrew Rouse went streaking to the river for a quick prayer to the goddess Rangda, Crown Royal Hotels called to fire him and put Sherm in charge of the Monkey Forest Road project.

After he got the word he was in charge, Sherm headed out from Poppie's Guest House to find his friend. He found him down at the Monkey Forest Road site, running like a lunatic after the *balian*, who was charging around the grounds waving what looked like a tennis racket covered with long colored strings. Sherm figured this must have been the *sealing off the site with energy lines and driving away the negative spirits* that Andrew had been all excited about the night before. Sherm yelled over to Andrew, who glanced over at him but kept charging after the *balian*. At least, Sherm thought, he's got his clothes on. He couldn't tell his best friend he was fired if the guy didn't have his clothes on. He decided to tell Andrew later, and gathered a couple dozen workers and a bulldozer and headed up to the north end of the property. There was still a lot of flattening to do up there that had been called off by Andrew when he realigned the design plans on *kelod* lines. Sherm got to work and tried to put out of his mind what he was going to tell Andrew, but suddenly, after pushing down some trees with the bulldozer, they found their access to one of the villa sites blocked by a few large boulders. It was going to



"I don't mind you talking dirty during sex. As long as it's me you're talking to."

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be a bitch moving them, and Sherm was considering dynamite, when the *balian* rushed by him waving his tennis racket, followed by Andrew and Victoria.

According to the *balian*, as translated by the kid Wayan, the boulders were an ancient *pura dalem* shrine—one so ancient the primitive carvings were barely visible, though the *balian* ran his fingers over the stone as if reading braille.

Sherm said he didn't know why he didn't tell Andrew he was fired right then but instead listened to his friend go on and on about how it wasn't their right to destroy the ancient sacred property of the Balinese. Suddenly Victoria interrupted Andrew to say *she* thought the boulders should go. Sherm said (to big laughs in the Rangoon bar) he figured Victoria was thinking in her pretty head, It's either these boulders, or no more helicopter skiing for me and Andrew in the Canadian Rockies.

While Andrew Rouse explained his view of things to Victoria, Sherm had a big idea, and sent the kid Wayan off with a mashed handful of 1000 rupiah notes and told the kid to find the village *pedanda* and drag him out here into the bush. The *pedanda* came running up the jungle path 15 minutes later, and Sherm took him aside and laid rupiahs on him until the *pedanda* suddenly had an inspiration.

The holy village *pedanda* said in his opinion it would be OK to transfer the spirits in this ancient shrine into a temporary structure until Crown Royal Hotels was able to build a large temple to house them properly. Sherm winked at us all in the Rangoon bar and asked us if we could guess who was told he'd get the permanent cushy job as *pedanda* in this new temple.

So under the *pedanda*'s excited direction, the workmen built a temporary spirit holder in an hour; it looked, Sherm said, just like an oversize birdcage. With another ten minutes of hocus-pocus the *pedanda* had the ancient spirits out of the shrines and into the birdcage. Victoria was so excited—she must have figured there was still a chance Andrew wouldn't lose his job—she asked to carry the birdcage to the *pedanda*'s house back in the village, where the spirits would reside until the new shrine was built. Andrew Rouse sat down on the jungle floor as if exhausted, and watched Victoria walk away with the birdcage down the freshly torn-up road.

Victoria tripped on a root on the way back to the village and crushed the birdcage under her. The *balian* had followed right behind her. Sherm said the old witch doctor really bloody carried on when he saw the crushed birdcage.

•

Sherm told us how a couple of times that night he walked down the hall of Poppie's Guest House to Andrew Rouse's room but just stood there before the door in the dark thinking about all their years together. Sherm went back to the porch and drank scotch. And then he noticed that he could hear himself think—that the cicadas had turned off their racket for the first time since he arrived in Bali. But all he could think about was how he had to go back in and tell his best friend Andrew Rouse that it was all over—that Crown Royal Hotels had fired his ass. Sherm, in his words, "never found the guts that night in Ubud to do the tough thing, the thing that needed to be done, the thing that should have been done much earlier."

So Sherm sat in a wicker chair and got drunk, and it started to rain. At first it was only a couple of scattered drops on the metal roof of Poppie's, then there were gusts of clattering drops, and then it was a torrential downpour. It wasn't the rainy season yet, but the street in front of the porch was suddenly a brown river. Sherm said he sat there thinking how they were going to need a damn boat, and then Sherm heard, over the roar of the rain, a woman screaming. The power went out right then in the whole village. The screaming was coming from inside Poppie's, and Sherm stumbled back inside and felt his way down the dark hall. He banged on the locked door, and then put his shoulder hard against the door and the lock snapped off. It was pitch-black in the room, and he felt his way to the bed, and then felt the shape of a foot. He ran his hands up Victoria's legs, felt her squirming on the bed. The kid Wayan arrived and held a kerosene lantern in the doorway, and Sherm could see Victoria. She was clutching her stomach and twisting her head back and forth in the pillow as she screamed.

Sherm held her glistening face in his two hands. The rain was so loud on the roof he had to yell at Wayan twice about finding a doctor, and the kid just looked at him and shook his head. Sherm said he looked down at Victoria and said he knew whatever the bloody hell her problem was, she had to see a real doctor soon, and he picked her up and ran with her out to the jeep. When he got to the road he was sloshing up to his ankles in

"Well done, Jenkinson! I've always felt that whistle-blowers should be rewarded. Alas, company policy is to get rid of them."

a river of mud. He got about 200 yards down the road in his jeep before he slid off the road like he was on brown ice, and the jeep wedged at an angle against a banyan tree. Sherm stumbled with Victoria back up through the rain to Poppie's. Some of the men helped carry her back inside. The power blinked on for a moment, and then went off again. In the flash of light he saw Victoria shivering from head to toe. He yelled for some blankets. In the hallway he could hear some of the men yelling that the phone was still down.

It was then that Andrew Rouse and the *balian* ran into the room. Both of them were covered with the dark brown mud, and all you could see were the whites of their eyes taking in the scene. The *balian* stood looking at Victoria with a distressed look on his face, but Andrew fell to his knees next to Victoria and started yelling over the pounding drum of the rain how sorry he was that he didn't stop her from carrying the birdcage—as if, Sherm said, the bloody birdcage had a damn thing to do with her being sick.

Sherm said the witch doctor and Andrew Rouse had a private conversation in the hallway, and then Sherm suddenly stopped telling all of us in the Rangoon bar his story, and just sat at the end of the bar tapping an empty shot glass. He didn't respond to any of the engineers yelling at him to go on, just sat there *tap, tap, tapping* his shot glass. The bartender tried to fill the glass, and ended up nervously splashing scotch all over Sherm's hand. Then the bartender retreated out of the candlelight, and the engineers stopped yelling, and we listened to the rain pounding on the metal roof of the Rangoon bar. Sherm started up again, and said so quietly that I had to repeat it for everyone, "The *balian* and Andrew took off into the rain, leaving me to take care of Victoria."

Sherm said he sat on the edge of the bed holding a damp towel to Victoria's head for the rest of the long night. He sent his men running through the rain down the road to get a doctor. When she groaned he held Victoria in his arms like she was his daughter, and all that night he started to realize that *he* would be to blame if this young woman died. I didn't understand why at the time, but let him go on with his story. Sherm said at dawn the pounding rain slacked off slightly, and little by little Victoria's fever started to break. It was still raining at noon when Wayan brought in some food on a tray, and Victoria at this point was able to sit up and take a few mouthfuls of fruit. It was then that Sherm left her to go in search of the *balian* and Andrew.

Sherm suddenly stopped and looked around at us in the Rangoon bar with a look of disgust—as if he suspected the *balian* or Andrew was hidden among us engineers. He then closed his eyes and shaking his head in disgust told us he found the old Balinese bastard and Andrew out at the Monkey Forest Road site. They had rigged a tarp up in the trees over the site where Victoria had fallen on the birdcage with the ancestor spirits. Sherm absolutely didn't want to tell us what they had done. He kept shaking his head and looking into his empty shot glass. Turns out Andrew Rouse and the old *balian* had burned all the Crown Royal payroll for the month in a metal bucket. Millions of rupiahs went up in smoke that night to appease the ancestors.

Sherm said he stood there in the jungle and told the two of them that Victoria was better, and said he just about wanted to cry when they hugged and grinned at the smoke coming from the old bucket.

•

Crown Royal Hotels wanted Andrew Rouse arrested by the Indonesian authorities. Sherm hung his head in the bar in Rangoon and told us how he hung up the phone and went to his old friend's room at Poppie's. From behind the thin door he could hear Andrew arguing with Victoria about how he wanted to stay in Ubud and study with the *balian*. Sherm didn't knock just then but went back to the porch and his bottle of scotch. He could still hear Victoria yelling at Andrew from the porch, so he walked down to the construction site. When he returned later that night the kid Wayan told him Victoria was gone in a jeep with her bags, and Mister Andrew had walked up the road to the *balian*'s village. Later that night Andrew showed up out of the gloom of the road as Sherm sat drinking on the porch, and asked to be taken on as a common Balinese laborer. Sherm said he just couldn't bring himself to say no to his old friend.

Sherm perked up as he told us how he worked around the clock to get the construction project back on track. He set up gas-powered lamps and had three shifts of workers. Sherm said if he saw some Bali boy taking time off to pray he had the guy fired before he was up off his knees. He said one day they were putting up pillars made from tree trunks on the front porch of the new hotel, and some of the workers insisted the root end of the tree trunks had to face the earth. Sherm said he didn't think twice, just fired the whole lot of them on the spot. One of the engineers asked the obvious question, and Sherm said, no, Andrew Rouse was not among those fired that day. He said Andrew worked harder than any native worker, and then every night went back up to the *balian*'s village to continue his "studies."

Finally, the Ubud Crown Royal Hotel's basic physical structures were finished, and it was time to start thatching all the roofs. It was on that day that

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Andrew Rouse came up to Sherm and spoke to him for the first time in weeks and said, "The *balian* says it is not a good day to begin thatching." Andrew had a big handful of the wild grass that they were going to use in the thatching, and started waving it in Sherm's face and rattling on and on about how to the Balinese wild grass is sacred, how it has a living spirit and needs to be honored.

It was at this point that Sherm stood up in that bar on that monsoon night in Rangoon. He turned to us engineers and said simply, "That was the last straw. I fired him. I finally fired my best friend Andrew Rouse."

Sherm stood there and explained to us how the minute he uttered those magic words *you're fired, Andrew*, he saw his old friend crumble before his eyes. He said he understood right then that his friend's crazy delusions had been paper-thin from the beginning and had only been allowed to survive and even thrive by his not taking a hard line. Sherm shook his square head and said remorsefully, "If I had just got Andrew Rouse fired that first day he showed up in Bali and started sniffing the air and telling me it smelled like bloody perfume. . . ."

Sherm went on to tell us how he left Bali for a few days and delivered Andrew Rouse back to his wife, and paid for Andrew's stay in the best psychiatric hospital in Toronto. He announced to us somewhat triumphantly that Andrew Rouse was today still on antidepressants but working successfully as a consultant for a large commercial real estate development firm, and that he and his wife were happy again and looking forward to his retirement. One of the engineers in the Rangoon bar yelled out, "Bloody good for them two!"

Right then the flickering fluorescent lights came back on in the bar. The lights seemed to surprise Sherm, and he looked at his watch and said he had to run. He reached in his pocket and took out his wallet. He looked in the wallet and then raised his face and smiled at me curiously and reached into the wallet with his thumb and forefinger. He took out a small wadded clump of something and said to me it was some of the wild thatching grass Andrew Rouse had been waving in his face that day he had finally fired him. Sherm then nervously emptied the rest of his wallet onto the bar—enough money for us expatriates to drink for the rest of the night and through the next day. He shoved the empty wallet in his back pocket, and as he passed me he pressed the small clump of Balinese grass into my palm and closed my fingers around it. Sherm looked me straight in the eyes as he closed my fingers firmly around the grass, and I swear he looked strangely relieved. Then he almost tripped over himself to get out of the bar and into the monsoon.

When he was gone I looked down at the grass in my hand. At first I thought nothing about it, but then I looked again and then held the grass up to the fluorescent lights. The thing is this: That clump of grass was still emerald green. It was more than two years old and still hadn't dried out. You could put it to your nose and close your eyes and your head was filled with the scents of Bali. I showed it to the other engineers in the Rangoon bar that night, and they all cheered and toasted old Sherm for his "bloody good prank." One of the men took the grass, looked at it for a full minute and then as he handed it back said, "He must have kept it in his refrigerator." I sat there in the bar looking down at the moist grass in my open palm, thinking it was impossible it was still so fresh, and then remembered one of my last days on Bali back at the close of my wandering 20s.

I had been surfing the pipes all day at Kuta. That night at a bar called the Topi Copi I met this woman who had until recently been an ornithologist back in the States, working for Du Pont to prove a certain species of warblers was not in crisis. She told me how she had banded warblers in Massachusetts, and then moved down to the Caribbean, and the first bird she captured on Tortola was the first bird she had banded up North. She added another red band on its leg, and when she went back up to New England a few months later, she was sitting at her kitchen table having a morning cup of coffee when she looked out the window at her bird feeder, and there was a double-red-banded warbler cocking his head back and forth at her. She asked if I thought she was crazy for quitting her job, and I said at the time, a lot of ornithologists probably use red bands.

"An ATM is virtual sex to me."

JON STEWART

(continued from page 72)

STEWART: Well, I'm known for my rakish comebacks. I believe I said, "Nuh-uh" and let him take it from there. It was raining as I was leaving, and I remember thinking, What a lovely literate metaphor for my career right now.

PLAYBOY: What kept you going?

STEWART: The combination of rejection and laughter. They didn't laugh ten times, but they laughed once and I gambled that I could get them to do it again. I also realized that stand-up was about getting your face beat in, and I might as well get used to it. Comedy became like a new girlfriend. I'd wake up at four in the morning, and instead of a hard-on, I had an idea, and I wrote it down. Ninety-eight percent of them were garbage, but I was in love.

But there was no epiphany after a 28-hour cocaine binge, as I sat there, staring at my sweaty self in the mirror, thinking, *No one gets out of here alive!* It happened over two years. I was living a comfortable life: I made fine money working for the state of New Jersey. I had a car. I had a house. I played on the liquor store's softball team. That could have lasted 40 years.

PLAYBOY: Sounds like you were Jon Bon Jovi in that Ed Burns movie *No Looking Back*.

STEWART: You know what? I think I might be telling you that plot. I'm sorry. No: I didn't grow up around there at all. Wait! Hold on a second. No: I was an Army kid. No, that's *Three Kings*.

PLAYBOY: What did you do for the state of New Jersey?

STEWART: I was a contingency planner for emergencies. I happened to be a bit of a whiz at the then-new Lotus 1-2-3, so I had to make charts of centers for psychiatric treatment and how many extra beds they might have, just in case we were attacked by Pennsylvania and took some casualties. At what point could we set up a triage center and where would we find an extra minivan? I was responsible for our level of readiness in 1985. Let me tell you: We had a lot of canned goods. We were ready. It took me six months.

They were about to re-up me for another 40 years in Jersey, and before I signed the papers, I thought, You know what? I'm 23. If I leave, no one's going to miss me. I don't have kids, I don't have a girlfriend. I don't have anything that I've always romanticized having, so now's the time. I didn't want to be 30 years old and doing the same thing. I thought, I can always be one of the bitter guys in my town, so why not go to New York and fail and come back? It's not like they won't save a seat for me. I checked out in a week and a half. I'd never told my friends or my family what I wanted to do, so to them it was like a bombshell. I walked in and said, "I'm selling my car and moving up to New York to become a stand-up comedian." They looked at me like I had the three nipples I have.

PLAYBOY: Do you still love New Jersey?

STEWART: New Jersey is tremendous. Everyone's got New Jersey wrong. What we've done in New Jersey is create the world's largest, smelliest scarecrow, and we've kept people away from it for years just by saying, "Where's the point that the most people who aren't really dedicated to this state will see?" It's the Turnpike, because the majority of people are going to be hitting the airport or heading from New York down south or up north. If we create an area of what appears to be pure, toxic genetic-mutation soup right along that road, everyone who drives by is going to go, "Holy shit!" But it's a scarecrow. It exists solely for the purpose of driving others away.

PLAYBOY: Next segment: What's the correspondent's piece?

STEWART: We would visit the mosquito-catching program I was part of when I was 18. I used to go down to a Jersey Pine Barrens in a state car. We'd bring the little critters back to Trenton for encephalitis testing. We didn't pull their genitals off. My job was solely to catch them, knock them out with chloroform, sort them male–female, and bring all the females back.

PLAYBOY: How about "In Other News?"

STEWART: Stewart discovers alcohol and Tom Waits; Waits decides he doesn't want to be found.

PLAYBOY: The celebrity interview?

STEWART: My father. We'd bring him on. After the interview he still doesn't believe I have my own show.

PLAYBOY: Describe that interview.

STEWART: It'd probably be one question and then three and a half minutes of him explaining the answer to me by writing and graphing it on a napkin. He was a physicist.

PLAYBOY: What one question have you always wanted to ask your dad?

STEWART: Ain't I doin' good, Pa? Ain't I? Then he would explain through graphs and charts why I'm not. It's a very precise equation calculation. It's calculus, something I don't really understand. But I would get to keep the napkins, to back it up.

PLAYBOY: Does your father really think you're not doing well?

STEWART: Hey, hey. Don't think you're on to something here! No, I think he thinks it's fine—probably.

PLAYBOY: How old were you when your parents divorced?

STEWART: Ten or 11.

PLAYBOY: You saw him afterward?

STEWART: Oh yeah. Hey, pizza every Sunday, my friend. Or every other Sunday.

PLAYBOY: Do you have a good relationship with him?

STEWART: Uh . . . what do you mean? He

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hasn't broken up with me.

PLAYBOY: Did he try to explain the mysteries of the universe to you?

STEWART: Not that I remember. I was just happy, when I turned seventeen, to realize maybe the divorce wasn't my fault. I saw that one after-school special where the kid thinks it's their fault, and I watched it with tears: "Yes, that's true." Then you realize, Oh, it's *not* my fault. In my hazy memory, I was thinking I had done something or gotten into some minor trouble before it happened. You sort of have the sense of, Oh, Christ, what have I done? But that's because kids are completely egocentric: I fucked up, therefore. . . .

PLAYBOY: Didn't your parents say, "Dear, it's not your fault"?

STEWART: I'm sure they did. But you're living in the world of hyperbole at that age. The drama itself was somehow comforting. It was the Seventies; *I'm OK—You're OK* had just come out but I don't think anybody had read it all the way through yet.

PLAYBOY: OK. Now let's go to "This Just In."

STEWART: Stewart lands a regular job, may never have to buy clothes again. Then we do a moment of Zen.

PLAYBOY: What's yours?

STEWART: Probably footage of me watching one of my cats a few years ago take a shit right next to the litter box because I had been too lazy to actually clean it out. It was a brief message of her displeasure. She was the Felix Unger of cats: If it wasn't just right in the litter box, "I'm sorry, my friend, I'm going right on the floor next to it, just to show you."

PLAYBOY: Much of your humor is based on your being Jewish. You even called your HBO special *Unleavened*. Are Jews funnier?

STEWART: Than?

PLAYBOY: Gentiles.

STEWART: Any time you're a group that wants desperately for others to like you so they'll let you stick around, you have a tendency to be more amusing. When you're in charge there's really no need to be funny. The captain of the football team doesn't have to be funny. Water boy? He has to be a little amusing.

My comedy is all about anything that, when I was growing up, made me feel different or disenfranchised in any way. What is comedy other than: *Love me! We're not so bad. We don't really love the money. Love me!* Height, looks and religion became the cornerstones of what I talk about. They had to, because as a kid you learn preemptive-strike comedy. If I hit someone with a tremendous joke about how small and Jewish I am, they had nowhere to go. All they could do is punch me once and leave.

PLAYBOY: Were you the only Jew in your school?

STEWART: No. There were probably four or five, but Lawrenceville was not a predominantly Jewish area.

PLAYBOY: Did you feel ostracized?

STEWART: It's not like I walked into school and everyone turned their backs and shunned me [*laughs*]. It was just in my head. I felt different even if no one else noticed or cared. Most people were very nice to me. I got my share of ass-kickings and being made fun of, but it wasn't anything unusual. My parents divorced, but other people have gone through that as well. I'm not going to write *Jonathan's Ashes*. I didn't have a tragic childhood. It was OK, normal. But if you're looking for what informs my thought process, it was those feelings of inadequacy that were placed there *by me, for me*. They were grounded in reality, but one with far less importance than I gave it. In other words, it wasn't like *The Breakfast Club*, with Judd Nelson just fucking poking me in the chest every day. But in *my* head I was a weirdo.

PLAYBOY: Are you now at ease with your height, religion and looks?

STEWART: When I stopped thinking about them, all the problems they caused went away. There comes a point in your life where you go, "I guess I'm not going to be six feet tall—and I can't believe how important that used to be to me." I'm fine. If I can't reach a glass, I can just stand on a chair.

PLAYBOY: Jewish mysticism has been in the news lately. Have you given any thought yet to studying the Kabbalah?

STEWART: I'm letting Madonna get her feet wet, and if it seems OK, I'm jumping in. You know, nothing shakes my world more than giant celebrities who tell us about their spiritual awakenings.

PLAYBOY: Oh? Why?

STEWART: Because it's amazing to me that the journey to superstardom always culminates in, "Hey, we really all have to be nice to each other." Well, thank you! Of course you should be celebrated for coming to that conclusion!

All kidding aside, I can't believe that it's newsworthy when somebody of grand fame and wealth has an epiphany that maybe there's a larger world out there beyond their narcissism—and I'm not speaking of anyone in particular. It's as if a celebrity epiphany is somehow more valid than anyone else's and therefore that star is to be congratulated on their arduous spiritual journey. And guess what else? There is no grandeur in that epiphany. A celebrity's spiritual awakening is no different from or more important than one that happens to whomever is mopping up come in video booths on 42nd Street.

PLAYBOY: Sounds like business as usual.

STEWART: Of course, because in this business your status is elevated just for *not* shitting on people. You're celebrated as more than decent for acting *normally*. It makes me wonder: My God, what's going on behind that?

"Well, I don't know about you, Mrs. Ross, but my depression has certainly cleared up."

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PLAYBOY: What do you think?

STEWART: The problem, I think, is people caring about all the things they shouldn't and not caring about all the things they should. It's that disparity that creates a fucking star temper tantrum when the tandoori chicken isn't orange enough. Any human being who has any sense of perspective would understand not to shit on the five-dollar-an-hour production assistant because he didn't understand that you said "spring rolls" and not "dumplings." To miss that point is just insanity.

Brett Butler is a great example of this. I've known Brett for a lot of years and she's an incredibly intelligent, funny woman. She flipped out—which I think she would admit to now—but they didn't call her on it until the show was no longer making them the kind of money that justified tolerating her behavior. There is no medal of honor for the people who pulled the plug on that show. They waited until it was economically feasible for them to do so before saying, "Hey, you can't treat people like this."

PLAYBOY: And that sort of stuff is common in Hollywood?

STEWART: It's common in the world. We are a global capitalistic conglomerate. Corporation Earth. Whatever drives that bottom line drives our behavior. The more you bring in, the more you are allowed to fuck up. It's as simple as that. When you stop bringing it in, people stop hanging around.

The random glorification can also lead to random vilification. That's the double-edged sword. People in that spotlight are more loved than they should be and more despised than they should be. That's why they're always complaining about being praised and then suddenly attacked.

PLAYBOY: If we were to help you package your philosophy and get a celebrity interested in it, should he or she be celebrated for "getting it"?

STEWART: No. And I shouldn't be either. It's like the notion that tacking up the Ten Commandments on a wall in a high school is going to help. Who doesn't already know "Thou shalt not kill?" Who is going to walk into a principal's office, look at the Commandments and go, "Thou shalt not kill? Are you fucking kidding me? When did that happen?" It's the same thing with the red ribbon for AIDS. It's a wonderful thought, but who's not aware of AIDS? It's people putting their hope in symbolism and bullshit and not in the actual work it takes to attain the kind of world you want. The problem is that people have to stop looking to others to tell them how to act and feel. People's internal barometers have to be dialed up a notch. [*Pauses*] I'm on the pulpit now, brotha! Tes-ti-fy! By the way, this is all one man's bullshit. I want to make that clear. I'm not out there beating the fucking sidewalk with my donation cup and a bell, trying to get money for this. It's my worldview and it has nothing to do with anybody else. Sure, I wish everyone thought this way, but they don't. And I'm not saying it's any more valid or interesting than anybody else's point of view. Everything comes with disclaimers. For instance, this philosophy is not valid in Tennessee. Or Alaska.

PLAYBOY: We should wrap this up. Describe the Jon Stewart the public never gets to see.

STEWART: Here's the weird thing: *This is my secret life*. You have no idea what's going on in my real life. I actually manage a Bennigan's. No one knows I'm here. That's the beauty of it. They don't get cable.

PLAYBOY: With which celebrity are you most often confused?

STEWART: By people who are drinking or not?

PLAYBOY: Drinking.

STEWART: Seinfeld.

PLAYBOY: Not drinking?

STEWART: The kid from *Married With Children*.

PLAYBOY: Why did you drop your last name, Liebowitz?

STEWART: It's hard to see your name in lights when you feel like there won't be enough lights to spell it.

PLAYBOY: This interview will appear in early 2000. Would you care to predict what will happen during the millennial celebrations?

STEWART: Hmm. I won't come out of my bunker until January 8, so many of those days will be something of a blur. However, when I do come out, through the smoldering ruins, I'll see the hand of a child holding a daisy and think, *We're going to be OK!* Then an animated bluebird will land on my shoulder and whisper something dirty and vaguely anti-Semitic in my ear.

PLAYBOY: What do you already miss about the last thousand years?

STEWART: I guess the pace of it. The kindness we showed each other. The gentle tableau of a pie cooling on a sill while Ma stands out in the back and tries to figure out why the radar dish won't get the porno channel.

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INDIE MOVIE MOGUL

(continued from page 120)

Because DV camcorders are small and light (few weigh more than two pounds) they shake when held by even the steadiest hands. The manufacturers compensate for the shake with image stabilization systems. Here, too, there is an optical and digital divide. Optical—found on Sony and Canon camcorders—wins again.

The most important component of a DV camcorder is the charged couple device, a technology that transforms visual images into electronic signals. Pixels are the important measure here. The more pixels a CCD has, the better. The pixel count in current model camcorders ranges from 200,000 to more than 1 million. Don't consider a camcorder with a CCD of less than 380,000 pixels. The picture will lack detail. Most consumer camcorders have a single CCD that captures all colors. The best camcorders (such as Sony's DCR-TRV900) rely on three CCDs, each dedicated to a different range of hues. That makes them bigger and more costly than single CCD models, but the result is truer color. That may be changing as the pixel count on single CCD camcorders climbs. The picture quality of the million-pixel Sony DCR-PC 100—a camcorder the size of a Sony Walkman—is impressive.

Current manufacturers have staked out their own niches. JVC makes inexpensive (but feature-rich) camcorders. Sony leads with the latest technology, combining high-quality lenses with the most-impressive electronics. Canon, Sharp and Panasonic fall in between. Most of the new camcorders come with IEEE-1394 connections (called iLink by Sony and Firewire by Apple and its licensees). IEEE-1394 is the generic rubric for the combination of cables and ports over which video transfers among DV devices. Some cheaper camcorders forgo 1394, so check before you buy. Without the connection, you'll be shut out of DV's best features.

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and use it exclusively to store video. That way, when you've finished editing your first hour of film, you can transfer the results to CD-ROM or videotape, purge the drive and start again.

On the computer side, DV technology is still not standardized because different manufacturers push their own 1394 systems. Until there's unity, it pays to choose mainstream-powered machines. Right now, that's either Apple's Macintosh or Wintel systems featuring Intel's Pentium III processors and Windows 98 or NT. The makers of editing software and add-on boards are writing code for these machines only. (Avoid Windows 2000 for now. It'll take the DV industry a while to determine how best to work with the new operating system.)

As in most computer matters, both platforms have advantages and disadvantages. On the PC side, there's much more software and add-ons, and new software tends to hit here first. If you already have an Intel-powered computer, you can use parts of it to build a dream video system. If you're starting from scratch, you'll find PCs to be about 20 percent cheaper than a comparable Mac.

But there is tedious work involved in following the PC path. Few of the big vendors make video-ready machines. Only Sony and Compaq have embraced 1394 by making machines that have all the hardware and software you need to start editing video as soon as you unpack the computer. In contrast, Dell and Gateway seem to have never heard of the technology. With their machines and most others, you have to buy and install an add-on board (priced upwards of $150) to give your machine a video port. Installing the board takes about ten minutes and requires only a screwdriver—on a good day. On a bad day you could do time in tech-support hell.

Apple is all about ease. The company offers two tiers of computers for digital editing. The iMac DV Special Edition ($1500), which comes with Firewire ports and preinstalled editing software, is simple to operate, making it ideal for beginners. But its 13-gig hard drive storage will get eaten up quickly. For more serious work, opt for a Power Mac. Our favorite? The 450Mhz Macintosh G4 with a 27-gig hard drive. It's priced high at $3500 (not including monitor and editing software), but you get what you pay for—a supremely powerful computer that's hassle free to operate.

SOFTWARE AND VIDEO BOARDS

Digital video editing software and hardware can easily cost more than the computer and the camcorder combined. Adobe Premiere ($580 for the Mac and PC) is the software package against which all others are measured. It's included with most high-end add-on boards, some of which, inexplicably, cost less than the software package itself. For the money, you get the ability to layer imagery from numerous video sources on the screen (making the cutting and inserting process far easier). And you get the tools necessary to create impressive, special-effects-laden productions—the kind of video montage that smacks of MTV. Add Adobe's After Effects ($690) to the mix and you can get even jazzier with animated text, slick motion graphics and Spielberg-worthy scene transitions. Premiere's closest competition on features is the slightly easier to use and more expensive ($1000) Final Cut Pro 1.2 from Apple.

Your choice of video board depends on your goals, and on whether you need to rush your projects out the door. Getting a computer to weave in titles, music and transition effects takes an enormous amount of computing power and time—even after you're done editing. Even the most muscular machines may have to work overnight to create a half-hour film. Higher-end boards, such as Pinnacle System's DV500 for the PC and DV300 for the Mac and PC ($1000 and $600), take some of the processing load off the computer's main brain and handle the work much faster.

For most new editors, the expensive boards are overkill. For less than $200, you can buy a computer add-on board—with software—that will give you hundreds of creative tools, including the ability to create titles, record voice-overs and dub in your own music. One of the best PC kits is the Pyro Digital Video 1394DV ($130), which comes with an excellent software bundle. The Pyro card adds three 1394 ports, which come in handy when you run out of hard disk space and need to add a compatible hard drive. Another good low-end combo is StudioDV from Pinnacle Systems ($200). Once you outgrow this package, Pinnacle offers a discount on upgrades to its more professional products, such as the aforementioned DV500. Want to score your own soundtrack? Creative Labs' Sound Blaster Live Platinum sound card ($200) lets you do so. It's designed with a breakout box that enables you to connect stereo and MIDI devices to the front of your PC.

SMART ACCESSORIES

We can't stress it enough: You'll need lots of disk storage. Attaching a 1394 hard drive is one way to avoid exhausting your system resources. Another way is to move finished video to rewritable CD-ROM. For that, you will need a CD-ROM drive (available from Creative Labs, Yamaha, Iomega and others for about $200 to start). Most of the DV editing packages let you save your movies as MPEG files (the same compression technology used to create DVDs). A one-hour film can fit on a single CD (at low resolution), making the disk a good medium for exchanging movies. MPEG movies play well on any relatively new PC that's equipped with Windows' Media Player (free from Microsoft) or the Quicktime Player (free from Apple). MPEG movies are also easy to distribute electronically over the Internet, provided you keep them short. Big files hog bandwidth.

If you just want to make tape copies for friends to watch on their television sets, you can hook up your camcorder to a VCR and make VHS dupes. For more convenient reproduction, Go-Video makes dual-deck VCRs that allow you to dub tape from one deck to another. Prices range from $300 to $600, depending on features.

THE INTERNET

In the digital age it makes sense that the Internet is one of the best places to go for DV info. Check out these sites. **Guide to Digital Video** (www.hypertech.co.uk/vidsite/mainframe.html): A plain-English guide to the jargon-rich world of DV. Useful links include a comprehensive FAQ page and connections to nearly every software and hardware maker playing DV. **DV Magazine Online** (dv.com): This site includes breaking news on products, resources for DV moviemakers and tutorials. **PriceScan** (pricescan.com): A "bot" that scans retail and e-tail stores for the best prices on a variety of merchandise, including DV camcorders. **FlickTips** (www.flicktips.com): Another good place to decipher the technobabble of DV, with good information on how to broadcast your films on the net using streaming video.

If you want to be inspired by the works of other DV auteurs, or would like to share your movies with the masses, visit these web hubs. **Atom Films** (atomfilms.com): A well-organized site with a selection of international films of all genres, including many shot on DV. Like all online movie sites, you'll need a high-speed Internet link to make the viewing process tolerable. Atom Films also debuts feature films over the Internet and organizes screenings where the films are shown on the big screen via digital projector. **ZeroOneFilms.com** (01films.com): A good place to start your end around Hollywood, this site is chock-full of both short and feature-length movies. ZeroOneFilms accepts and agrees to broadcast about 80 percent of all of the films submitted, and often will provide an online write-up about a film's creators. **Digital Film Festival** (dfilm.com): The name says it all. A few DV movies screened here include *Silence* (a film shot entirely with the Nintendo GameBoy camera jerry-rigged for video), *Virtual Date* (by *Swingers* director Doug Liman) and *Dreamboy* (an animated short by Christopher Dante Romano that was picked up by MTV).

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PRIVATE EYE

(continued from page 98)

Prominent among them was a no-nonsense avenger who shifted the locale from the West Coast to the East and upped the ante on sex and sadism.

> Some day, before long, I'm going to have my rod in my mitt and the killer in front of me. I'm going to watch the killer's face. I'm going to plunk one right in his gut, and when he's dying on the floor, I may kick his teeth out.
>
> —MICKEY SPILLANE'S MIKE HAMMER, IN *I, The Jury (1947)*

Spillane understood the mood of postwar America better than most other mystery writers of the day, and he profited from the knowledge. Readers couldn't get enough of a self-reliant hero who didn't feel the need to follow the rules of law. The bad guys didn't. Why should Hammer? His only restriction was the number of bullets he could load into his Army-issue .45. His only distractions were the incredibly beautiful and available women who threw themselves at him. He would pause to look and give the reader an intriguing description, but he rarely acted rashly. The dame trying to crawl up his pants might be a stone killer.

Only two years after Hammer put two slugs into the belly of a lady he almost loved ("How could you?" she asked him as she faded. "It was easy," he replied), a new, considerably less violent California shamus hung out his shingle.

> The thought of Sue fell through me like a feather in a vacuum . . . I wondered where she was, what she was doing, whether she'd aged much as she lay in ambush in time, or changed the color of her bright head.
>
> —LEW ARCHER, RECALLING HIS EX-WIFE, IN ROSS MACDONALD'S *The Doomsters (1958)*

When he arrived in Ross Macdonald's 1949 novel *The Moving Target*, Lew Archer, though no shrinking violet, was a kinder, gentler private eye than Spillane and even Chandler might have imagined. It took a while for readers to appreciate him. Chandler wrote to critic James Sandoe that he was impressed by Macdonald. But he thought the newcomer was giving Archer a voice that was too intellectual for his background, describing a car as being "acned with rust" and using medical Latin.

Regardless of the criticism, Macdonald freely admitted being influenced by Chandler. There was a difference however. Archer—divorced, world-weary and disillusioned—had fallen heir to the society that Marlowe only foresaw. By maintaining the earlier detective's shining knight's stance, Macdonald's private eye found himself in a society that had more or less accepted corruption and injustice. Out of step, confused as to why the world should be in such awful shape, he continued to plumb the murky past, searching for clues as to exactly what went wrong.

Was he not the perfect sleuth for the age of anxiety? John Leonard, then editor of *The New York Times Book Review*, seemed to think so. William Goldman's glowing front-page review of *The Goodbye Look* in 1969, along with Leonard's page two interview with Macdonald in that same issue, turned the novel into a best-seller. Macdonald's books continued to make the lists for as long as he was able to write.

By the middle of 1983, when he finally succumbed to complications caused by Alzheimer's disease, his immediate successor had been on the scene for nearly a decade.

> [I get] a hundred a day and expenses. But I'm running a special this week; at no extra charge I teach you how to wave a blackjack.
>
> —P.I. SPENSER, TO A PROSPECTIVE CLIENT, IN ROBERT B. PARKER'S *Mortal Stakes (1975)*

When he appeared in *The Godwulf Manuscript*, Robert B. Parker's Spenser was nearly a dead-ringer for Philip Marlowe, down to the British-poet last name and wiseguy attitude. There were also elements of Dashiell Hammett's lean style and Ross Macdonald's empathy for the helpless. No surprise, since the author had written a doctoral dissertation on the three writers. Over the years, he has moved the character further and further from the prototypes of Marlowe and Archer. Forget about that lonely P.I. life, dining at greasy spoons and passing dreary nights in drearier apartments. Spenser lives comfortably and dines as well as Nero Wolfe. He also has a proper nuclear family consisting of a loving if difficult significant other, an adopted son, a good friend and even a dog.

A while back, Parker began to streamline his novels, discarding complexity of plot in favor of straight-ahead quests interrupted by personal byplay involving his regular cast of characters. Readers haven't seemed to mind that the books are now primarily adventure stories, especially since Spenser continues to excel at clever repartee and satisfying methods of problem solving.

Today, among the many male P.I.s happily employed, two are the most likely candidates to carry the genre through the next couple of decades. One began in Spenser's footsteps, the other took an entirely different path.

> I produced the P.I. license and the license to carry, and watched him read them. "Elvis. This some kind of bullshit or what?"
>
> "After my mother."
>
> "Guess you take some riding about that."
>
> "My brother Edna had it worse."
>
> —ELVIS COLE, GOOFING ON A COP, IN ROBERT CRAIS' *The Monkey's Raincoat (1987)*

"Now that he's Lord Greystoke I never see so much as a Mother's Day card."

At the start of his career, in Robert Crais' *The Monkey's Raincoat*, Elvis Cole was a younger, hipper version of Spenser. He was flippant in the face of adversity, took delight in delineating the meals that crossed his educated palate and had the assistance of a semi-sociopathic sidekick when needed. He even had a cat to stand in for Spenser's mutt. Over the years, the gap between the two characters has widened. Parker has been changing his own formula. And, as is especially evident in Crais' current novel, *L.A. Requiem*, he has been moving both Elvis and his partner Joe Pike kicking and screaming into maturity. Good for Elvis and good for the genre. The changes in the lives of Spenser and Elvis have occurred slowly, with their stories progressing in more or less annual installments. The other newly famous private eye has been presented in a chronological format as unconventional as he is.

> I tried to think of better things. About our new young Irish president and Martin Luther King, about how the world was changing and a black man in America had the chance to be a man for the first time in hundreds of years. But that same world was being rocked almost daily by underground nuclear explosions and the threat of war.
>
> —EASY RAWLINS, AT THE DAWNING OF THE SIXTIES, IN WALTER MOSLEY'S *Black Betty (1994)*

When we first meet the unlicensed African American detective Easy Rawlins, in Walter Mosley's *Devil in a Blue Dress* (1990), he is a WWII vet, recently let go from his defense plant job and searching for a woman in the jazz clubs of 1948 Watts. His second appearance, in *A Red Death* (1991), picks him up in 1953, with Los Angeles dividing its time between redbaiting and blacklisting. And so it's gone for the other books in the series. The idea of a time-tripping P.I. was not precisely new. Max Allan Collins, a prolific wordsmith, had pioneered the concept, using it to place his hero, Chicago dick Nathan Heller, on the scene for historical mysteries (e.g., the current *Majic Man* in which Heller checks out the 1949 UFO crash landing in Roswell). Mosley's purpose seems more personal and more ambitious. With a unique voice, vivid characterizations and inflection-perfect dialogue, he not only presents the full adult life of his character, he provides us with eras and locations and moods and feelings rarely explored in mass market fiction. How he will handle Easy's inevitable destiny with contemporary times and old age is anybody's guess. But right now, Mosley remains one of the private eye novel's great hopes for the future.

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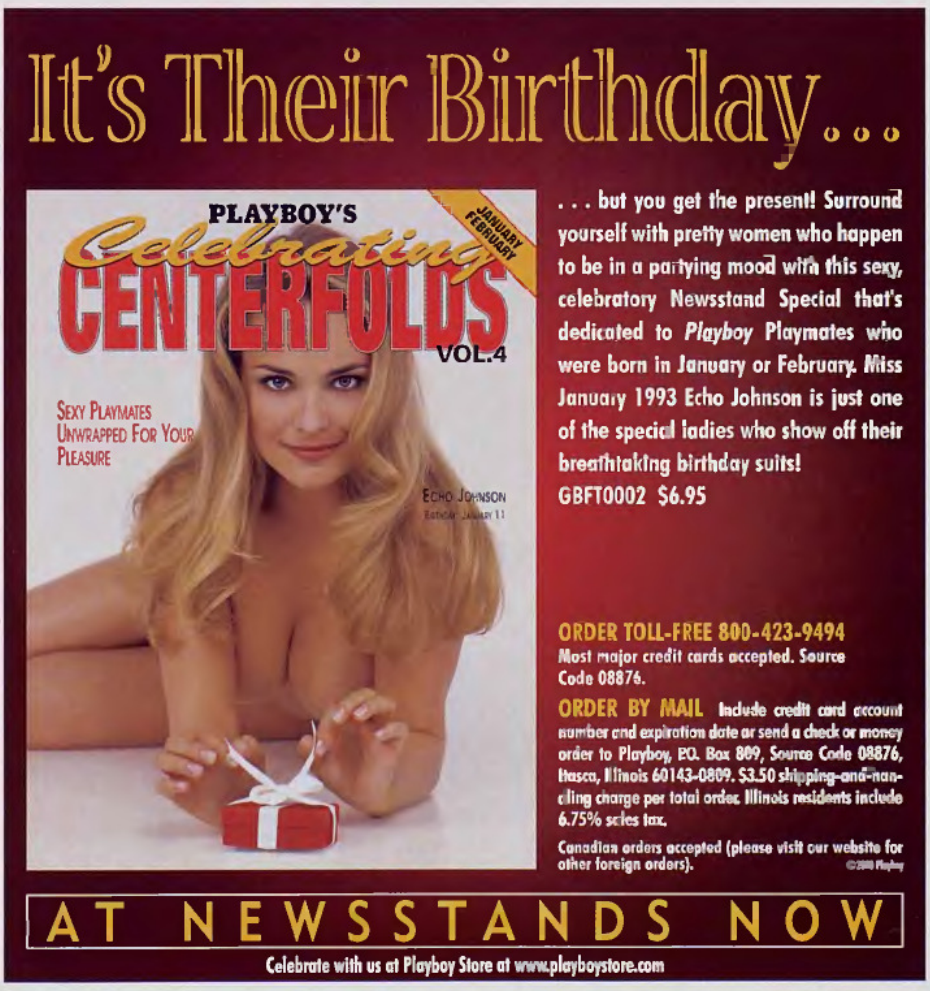
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Jesse II

(continued from page 117)

accomplished in the real world, than from a tenured professor getting a guaranteed salary from a university and who has never run a business in his life. Just like the media—they call themselves experts on elections and yet not one of them could predict my win. Now they're being questioned by the public and they don't like it. Why do you think they attack me now?

PLAYBOY: You're talking about the local media?

VENTURA: Yes. National treats me good. I have no complaint other than with Katie Couric and Matt Lauer. The national media—Tim Russert, Geraldo, Montel—have been respectful, they ask fair questions. I've done all those shows and they've been terrific. It's the state media of Minnesota, mainly the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*. They show me no respect. They call over here and ask for Jesse. They don't ever refer to me as the governor. It's like in the military—you're not saluting the man, you're saluting the uniform. I wear the uniform.

PLAYBOY: Which issues would you like to take on?

VENTURA: I would like to see more restrictions put on campaigning, where you're not allowed to start campaigning for any office until so many days before the election. Right now it's: Buy the election. Who can raise the most money? This is the one area in which I believe in socialism. If you achieve major party status, each candidate should be given an equal amount of money from the government and that's all you get to spend. Because it's now the buying of our elected officials.

PLAYBOY: You weren't bought. Are you an aberration or a harbinger of the future?

VENTURA: I'm an aberration, because they are never going to change those laws. It requires that career politicians change them. It's like term limits. Eighty-five percent of Americans want term limits, yet you never see them implemented because politicians won't cut off their careers. Any public officials who will not support term limits are no longer in it for the people but for themselves.

PLAYBOY: Isn't that the nature of politics?

VENTURA: We were founded upon a citizen government. You didn't have to be a lawyer or a political science major. You could be a butcher, a fireman, a teacher. You'd go and serve, and when you were done you'd go back to what you used to do. When did this become a career?

PLAYBOY: When politicians realized, as you have, that it's fun to be the king—or at least a duke.

VENTURA: So what? It don't make it right.

PLAYBOY: Your big three issues are: reforming the tax system, reforming the public school system and encouraging participation in government.

VENTURA: I'm not reforming the public school system; I'm just making it better. I'm not a teacher—let them reform it. I just want to give them the tools to do what's best to educate our children.

PLAYBOY: You want to spend $600 million to build the strongest public education system in the world. What will that money go for?

VENTURA: Reducing class sizes, providing more money for education in general. The better educated your kids are, the better the future's going to be.

PLAYBOY: Here's a quote from *Harper's* magazine: "Among the things we don't talk about in Minnesota: Our cities are racially polarized; downtown St. Paul is dying; there is no coherent plan for downtown Minneapolis other than to open more strip clubs; we suffer from urban sprawl that emulates LA's; our mass-transit system sucks; family farms are going bankrupt; and Minnesota's Iron Range economy has collapsed." Is this accurate?

VENTURA: No. [*Holds up the front page of the Pioneer Press with a headline reading* TWIN CITIES' JOBLESS RATE LOWEST IN U.S.] I think that runs in the face of whoever said that.

PLAYBOY: Are the cities racially polarized?

VENTURA: What does that mean? Who doesn't have racial problems? Those are universal problems not limited to Minnesota in any manner.

PLAYBOY: Is downtown St. Paul dying?

VENTURA: Not according to Mayor Coleman, my opponent. He says he's done a great job over there. I'll say this: There's no nightlife there. But if you look at downtown Omaha, downtown St. Paul looks like 42nd Street. You have very few cities, urban cores, that actually come to life at night.

PLAYBOY: Are there a lot of strip clubs in downtown Minneapolis?

VENTURA: Not any more than anywhere else. There's more in Atlanta. I used to work for Ted Turner, and there's more of them down there.

"Some of this stuff could be a dangerous mix of sex and politics."

PLAYBOY: Darrell McKigney, president of the Taxpayers League of Minnesota, criticized you for talking from both sides of your mouth, saying, "He talked about personal responsibility and said that government couldn't legislate against stupidity, then proposed more money to discourage people from smoking. He praised the private sector, then proposed building government railroads. He railed against surpluses but has proposed spending a big chunk of the current surplus."

VENTURA: That's inaccurate—they're putting the tobacco settlement in as tax surplus. That's windfall profit from a court case. It's apples and oranges. Minnesotans have gotten back every cent of surplus money. That was my promise. My position is to use the tobacco money for medical research. As for government railroads, isn't it government's job to provide public transportation? There is not one city in the U.S. that has built its way out of congestion. I'm looking for methods to get people to and from work besides the automobile. You can't just keep building highways. We are one of the few metropolitan areas that have no rail mass transit. As governor I have to look ten years down the road, not to the next election. I have to have a vision that goes beyond when I'm going to be here.

PLAYBOY: In his *Playboy Interview* last July, Congressman Barney Frank said he's worried about the repercussions of welfare reform—"the part that says you are cut off after five years. What about the people who have kids? I don't understand punishing kids because they have lousy parents."

VENTURA: There's your problem—is welfare truly helping the kids? The money may get to the family, but if you've got lousy parents to begin with, how can you trust the lousy parent to ensure the children get what they need? I took heat because I said cable TV shouldn't be allowed in welfare homes. Cable TV's a luxury. We have free channels, but cable guys tell me they go into homes where there is no food in the refrigerator, yet they get all the premium channels, HBO, Cinemax, Movie Channel, all of that. They found a way to pay for that, didn't they?

PLAYBOY: What about national and state funding for the arts?

VENTURA: This is capitalism—why should they be funded? How about national and state funding for sports? Or for guns? Or for rock and roll?

PLAYBOY: The National Endowment for the Arts has helped writers continue to write.

VENTURA: Why can't they hold down another job and write at night? Just like actors who have to wait tables until they can support themselves, if they have the talent. Should government do that for a kid who dreams to be a race car driver? He's doing another job so he doesn't

WHERE & HOW TO BUY

Below is a list of retailers and manufacturers you can contact for information on where to find this month's merchandise. To buy the apparel and equipment shown on pages 34, 47–48, 94–95, 119 and 175, check the listings below to find the stores nearest you.

WIRED

Page 34: "Suited for Cybersex": **Cybersuit** by *Vivid Interactive*, 800-822-8339. "Disney Does Home Theater": **Entertainment exhibit** by *Lutron Electronics*, 888-588-7661. "Game of the Month": **Software** by *EA Sports*, 800-245-4525. "Wild Things": **CD storage rack** from *Sharper Image*, 800-344-4444. **Instrument** by *Suzuki*, 800-854-1594.

MANTRACK

Page 47: *Pangkor Laut Resort*, 605-699-1100. Page 48: "Guys Are Talking About": **Knives** by *Spyderco*, Denver, 303-279-8383.

MOON WALK

Pages 94–95: **Sneakers:** By *Royal Elastics*, at Barneys New York, NYC, 212-826-8900, and American Rag, Los Angeles, 213-935-3154. By *Fila*, 800-PRO-FILA. By *Tattoo*, 800-577-3668. By *Prada*, at Prada stores. By *Dolce and Gabbana*, at Dolce and Gabbana boutiques. By *Nike*, 800-806-NIKE. **Sunglasses** by *Christian Dior*, at select Nordstrom's, Neiman Marcus and Saks Fifth Avenue stores.

HOW TO BE A MOVIE MOGUL

Page 119: **Camcorders:** By *Canon*, 800-652-2666. By *JVC*, 800-252-5722. By *Sharp Electronics*, 800-237-4277. By *Panasonic*, 800-211-7262. **Computers:** By *Sony Electronics*, 800-222-7669. By *Dell*, 800-999-3355. By *Gateway*, 800-846-2000. **Software and hardware:** By *Adobe Systems*, 800-833-6687. By *Pinnacle Systems*, 800-522-8783. By *ADS Technology*, 800-888-5244. **Accessories:** By *Creative Labs*, 800-998-1000. By *Yamaha*, 888-926-2426. By *Iomega*, 800-697-8833. Page 120: "DV Essentials": **Digital Camcorder** by *Sony Electronics*, 800-222-7669. **Computer** by *Apple Computer*, 800-538-9696. **Hard drive** by *VST*, 978-635-8200. **Monitor and computer** by *Compaq Computers*, 800-282-6672. **Dual-deck VCR** from *Sensory Science*, 877-563-9388.

ON THE SCENE

Page 175: "Slick Tech": **Flat-panel monitor** by *Samsung Electronics*, 800-726-7864. **Multimedia speakers** by *RKS Design*, 805-370-1200. **Electric razor** by *Grundig*, from Parks Products, 323-876-5454. **Digital watch** by *Spoon*, 800-545-2783. **Cell phone** by *Motorola*, 800-331-6456.

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have time to drive his race car the way he knows he could and should.

PLAYBOY: We're talking about art.

VENTURA: It's an art to drive a car.

PLAYBOY: We're talking about culture.

VENTURA: Our culture now is cars.

PLAYBOY: Will our race car drivers be remembered in the future, or our poets, novelists and artists?

VENTURA: Depends on what your cup of tea is.

PLAYBOY: So now we're discussing what's art. If you can do it, it's not art, right?

VENTURA: That's right. That's how I judge it. If I can do it, it ain't art [*laughs*].

PLAYBOY: Apparently you wouldn't classify Marcel Duchamp's urinal as art.

VENTURA: Who's he?

PLAYBOY: OK, how about Picasso's bike handlebar sculpture?

VENTURA: Picasso's terrible. He ain't art.

PLAYBOY: *Time*'s Artist of the Century isn't an artist?

VENTURA: Nope. You know why? Because his sun is a circle with lines going off it, and I used to do that in kindergarten. He has a stick guy sitting on a horse with the sun there. It ain't art.

PLAYBOY: How about Matisse?

VENTURA: Who's Matisse?

PLAYBOY: Are there any artists you like?

VENTURA: Peter Max. I like the colors he brings to things.

PLAYBOY: Is Max the artist you would choose for your official portrait?

VENTURA: Not necessarily. I'd choose him to do the background to bring it to light.

PLAYBOY: And who would paint you?

VENTURA: My good friend Steve wants to do it. He was my tag team partner under the name Steve Strong.

PLAYBOY: And will he paint you in tights and a feather boa?

VENTURA: I think I'll be in a suit.

PLAYBOY: Your fellow Minnesotan Garrison Keillor had a field day with you on National Public Radio as well as in his satirical book about you. Why does Keillor have it in for you?

VENTURA: You'd have to ask him. I don't listen to his show.

PLAYBOY: Did you read his book?

VENTURA: No.

PLAYBOY: Can you be amused by something like that, or do you tend to take it personally?

VENTURA: I can probably be amused, but what doesn't amuse me is how everyone can make money off me.

PLAYBOY: Keillor has described you as "a great big honking bullet-headed shovel-faced mutha who talks in a steroid growl." He has called you Jesse Helms with pectorals and a stronger chin.

VENTURA: Well, that shows how ignorant he is. I'm as far from Jesse Helms as you'll ever see. Isn't Jesse Helms blocking the gay man from being an ambassador? I wouldn't do that. I'm extremely socially liberal; Jesse Helms is not. So it shows how ignorant Garrison Keillor really is, that he's not the highbrow he portrays himself as. He's probably closer to Jesse Helms than I am.

PLAYBOY: Was he part of the reason you announced plans to kill state funding for Minnesota Public Radio and TV?

VENTURA: My idea to kill public radio isn't based upon him. It's based upon my experience in regular radio. We have to go out and earn our way. We have to get advertisers and compete in the capital market. Why should they be the exception? Why are they subsidized? Why aren't we subsidizing every radio station then?

PLAYBOY: Did it hurt your image when you took on the woman who was in college looking for student aid? You said, "Why did you become a single parent? Is it the government's job to make up for someone's mistakes?"

VENTURA: Not at all. I'm asking her why she's asking the government to solve a problem that she created. No one makes anyone become a parent. I asked her, "Where's the father?" She said, "He ran off." I said, "So it's my fault you got involved with a bum?" How am I the bad guy here?

PLAYBOY: We know your position on gun control, but since it's such a politically divisive issue, we have to press you on it.

VENTURA: You think taking away our guns is going to eliminate man's hostility toward man? Not true. Gun control people don't know what they're talking about. They're ignorant. They believe things without researching or understanding, like when I hear Rosie O'Donnell say, "Why should you be allowed to have a gun that shoots 20 bullets a second?" You can't. An assault weapon doesn't shoot 20 bullets a second. It's semiautomatic, the same as a deer rifle.

PLAYBOY: She may be exaggerating to make a point.

VENTURA: Oh, she may be exaggerating. What happens if I exaggerate that way? I get held with my feet to the fire. She's a talk-show host out there speaking to more people than I am, and she's perpetuating a lie that half of the ignorant people out there are going to believe.

PLAYBOY: Would you go on her show to debate her?

VENTURA: No. There's no point. She doesn't have any knowledge of what she talks about.

PLAYBOY: Do you really have a sign at your house that reads: WE DON'T DIAL 911?

VENTURA: Yep. It's in my home office.

PLAYBOY: Guns were a part of daily life when you were a Navy Seal. If you were in a position to order the assassination of someone like Saddam Hussein or Slobodan Milosevic, would you do it?

VENTURA: No. I'll tell you my view on Saddam Hussein. We won't take him out. We have to have our military presence on the world's oil, which is our lifeblood. If we don't have Saddam over there, the Arab nations are going to tell us to get lost. Saddam knows it too. Why

PLAYBOY's

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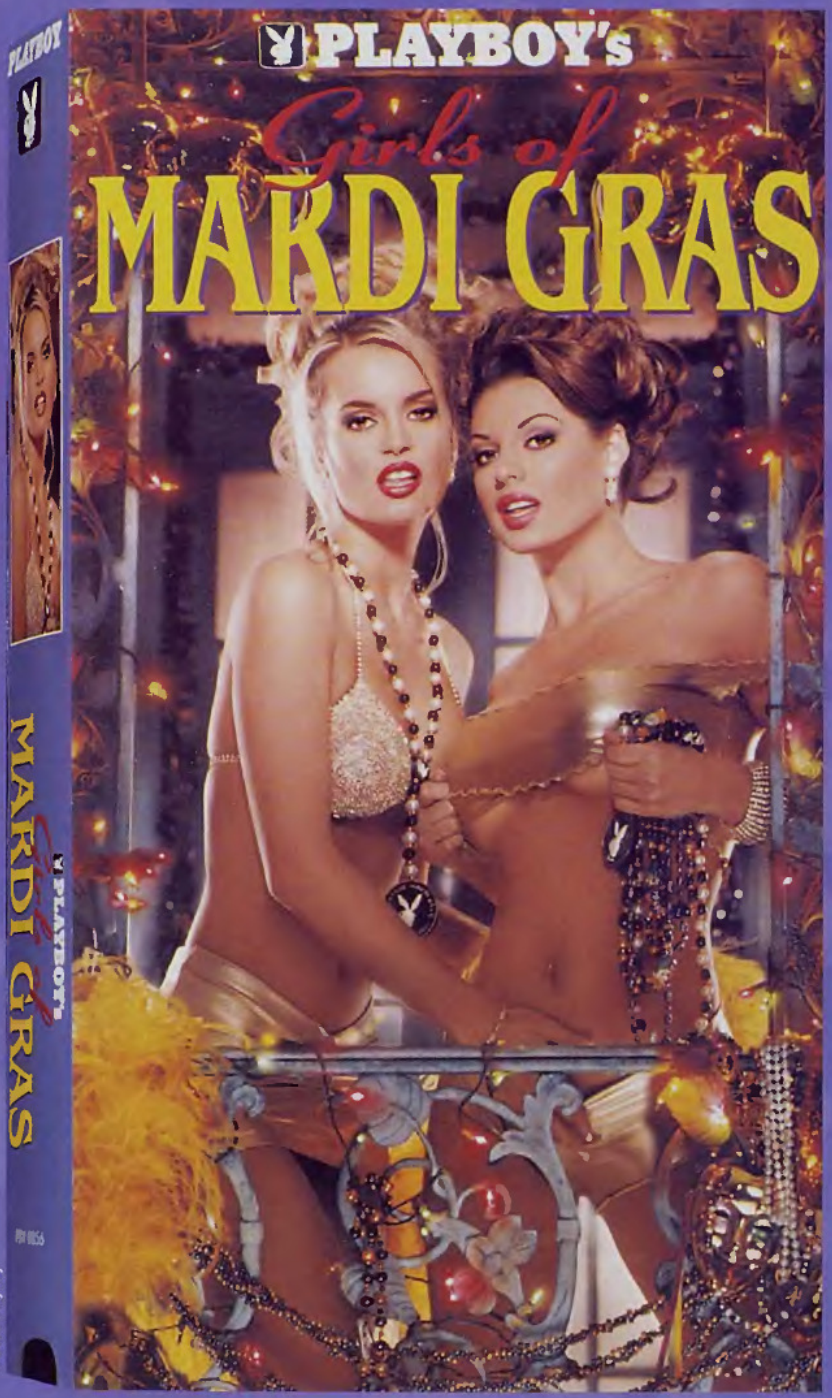

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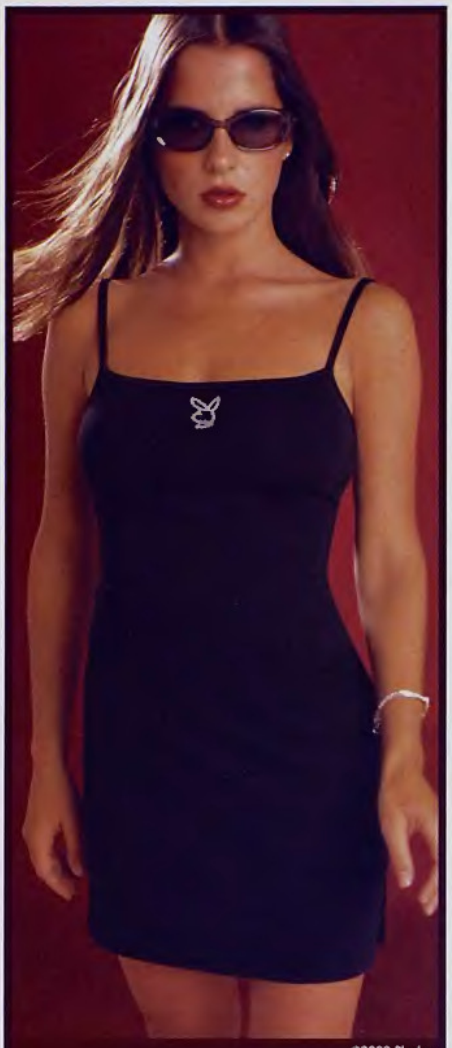

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do you think he can misbehave? It is not in our best advantage to take him out.

PLAYBOY: Osama bin Laden?

VENTURA: He's nothing. We'd take him out if we could get him.

PLAYBOY: Same with Milosevic?

VENTURA: You make a martyr out of him if you take him out.

PLAYBOY: You once said that if local tribes want to enforce their historic claims to hunting and fishing rights off their reservations, they "ought to be in birch bark canoes instead of 200-horsepower Yamaha engines with fish-finders."

VENTURA: I was just making an example. They're using a fishing rights treaty that dates back over a hundred years, when their methods of fishing were far different than they are today. I disagree with how the Supreme Court ruled, but I accept it. The Supreme Court says they can do it.

PLAYBOY: You also questioned the notion of sacred land. How does one determine what is sacred among other people?

VENTURA: If we get to the point where every person is allowed to declare something sacred, then we can't build a highway or a building. We can't do anything. I could go out and tell somebody that's sacred to me.

PLAYBOY: Do you accept that some land can be considered sacred? A burial ground?

VENTURA: No. I think cemeteries are the biggest waste of land going. We should cremate.

PLAYBOY: You've also said that the military-industrial complex was responsible for the assassination of President Kennedy. Why do you feel so strongly that there was a government conspiracy to kill him? How much did Kennedy mean to you?

VENTURA: He was a new beginning, in some ways, that got stopped. He was of a generation that both the young and the old could relate to. Everyone alive when he was killed remembers exactly what they were doing, except for two people: Richard Nixon and E. Howard Hunt. In Hunt's case, he lied about where he was at the time. With Richard Nixon, I don't know.

PLAYBOY: Hold on now—we know you believe in conspiracy theories and that Lee Harvey Oswald was not the sole assassin. But are you implying that Nixon had something to do with it?

VENTURA: I'm not insinuating; it's just things I've read, like Mark Lane's *Rush to Judgment* and his other book, *Plausible Denial*, about the trial of E. Howard Hunt in Florida.

PLAYBOY: What about *Case Closed*, Gerald Posner's book, which apparently debunks the conspiracy theories?

VENTURA: No it doesn't. Gerald Posner's big claim is that Lee Harvey Oswald and David Ferrie were never together, and yet in front of Congress a photo was shown of the two of them standing side by side. So that debunks Posner, doesn't it? Senator Yarborough was riding three or four cars behind Kennedy in the motorcade. Why did he testify the very day of the shooting that you could smell the pungent odor of gunfire going across the plaza if the shots were fired from an enclosed room five floors up behind the president?

PLAYBOY: Have you ever been to Dealey Plaza in Dallas?

VENTURA: No, but my wife has, and she told me you couldn't make the shot. Also, had John not been taken out we would have had 16 years of Kennedy presidencies. Jack would have been reelected for sure, and Bobby would have followed him for two terms.

PLAYBOY: How much different would this country be had that happened?

VENTURA: Very different. If Kennedy would have pulled us out of Vietnam, 50,000 American lives would have been saved, and all the turmoil from the antiwar movement would have changed. The Sixties and its music were based upon the war, because artists generally need a cause to write about. There are just too many facts. Why did Lyndon Johnson immediately order the limousine to be cleaned? That's evidence. You want to know the one that really got to me? This is a personal one. For whatever reason, my mother kept all the Minneapolis newspapers for that weekend. After she died, I found them in plastic bags. The assassination was at noon on Friday, and the assassination of his alleged assassin was Sunday at noon. Do you know the subheadline in the Minneapolis newspaper Monday morning? And this will tell it all to you. The subheadline read: DALLAS POLICE DECLARE CASE CLOSED. They hadn't talked to one witness or done any investigation, they had no confession—Oswald said he was just a patsy. And who allows the police to declare a case closed on a homicide? And why has the Kennedy killing been closed? The police didn't even have time to bungle this one. You've got to look at something to bungle it.

PLAYBOY: In your gut, do you feel that Lyndon Johnson had something to do with it?

VENTURA: I've always thought that after the fact he certainly did, when he became the power. Maybe he didn't before it happened. But after, certainly, him and J. Edgar Hoover.

PLAYBOY: It was pretty chaotic then. Nobody really knew what they were doing.

VENTURA: Everybody knew what they were doing.

PLAYBOY: And no one slipped up? How could there have been no leaks?

VENTURA: Because nobody truly knows. Everybody does their job. I have a friend who was involved with arms for hostages and didn't know it until it broke on TV. Didn't have a clue. This person was given a job, performed it, and had no idea

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what the big picture was.

PLAYBOY: When you were in the Seals, you had no clue what you were getting involved in?

VENTURA: Possibly. You're given a job. You're told you're going to deliver this from point A to point B. You do it, you're done, end of story.

PLAYBOY: Barney Frank feels that President Clinton is afraid of the military and that he lets it get away with abusing people. Are most politicians afraid of the military?

VENTURA: I'm not.

PLAYBOY: You have a degree of confidence that allows you to do what you've done in your life. A lot of people aren't quite as independent as you are.

VENTURA: Why?

PLAYBOY: Fear? Insecurity? Anxiety?

VENTURA: Then conquer it.

PLAYBOY: Is it so easy to conquer?

VENTURA: Yes.

PLAYBOY: Because you have done it?

VENTURA: Who was it who said that the only thing to fear is fear itself? Teddy Roosevelt?

PLAYBOY: Franklin.

VENTURA: Whichever. Close enough. One of the reasons I chose to be a Navy Seal was that I had a fear of heights. Well, you're not going to become a Seal if you fear heights.

PLAYBOY: Is that the only thing that you feared?

VENTURA: Pretty much. Height was my biggest obstacle. But becoming a Seal was more important than that fear. You had to jump out of airplanes, rappel out of helicopters—you better not fear heights, you just do it. Just do it!

PLAYBOY: Why are the Seals more efficient and better trained than any special Marine or Air Force or Army units?

VENTURA: Because we always evolve back to the water, our birthplace. Water's the most dangerous. If you're comfortable in the water you can be comfortable on land or in the air. We'll take our opponents into the water, and then the advantage is ours.

PLAYBOY: This is what they teach you?

VENTURA: It's something you know; don't have to be taught it. I'm very comfortable in water, it's a second home to me.

PLAYBOY: Do you have any fears today?

VENTURA: Yeah. I fear that my children will die before I do. I don't think there could be anything worse in the world.

PLAYBOY: What are the ways you've been able to bond with your son, Tyrel?

VENTURA: I always treat him as an equal. We're as much friends as we are father and son, much the way I was with my dad. Like all little kids, he has a fascination with guns and violence, and I wanted him to understand that a gun's only purpose is to kill. So I taught him what I know by patrolling on the river with him. We had a lot of fun doing that.

PLAYBOY: And did you do anything like that with your daughter, Jade?

VENTURA: No. Maybe it's harder for me to relate to a daughter, because I'm a pretty macho guy.

PLAYBOY: Have you or your wife had the sex education talk with your kids, or have you left it to the schools?

VENTURA: Oh no, we take care of that at home. My wife did it more with our daughter, and I did it more with our son. It was man-to-man, woman-to-woman. It's more comfortable that way for the children.

PLAYBOY: Would either of your children be open with you about any early sexual activity?

VENTURA: I don't ask. The only thing I tell them is that it's inevitable and to make sure they practice safe sex, because today's sex can kill you. When I grew up, sex couldn't kill you. It could, but not to the level it can today, with AIDS. When I grew up just about everything could be cured with penicillin.

PLAYBOY: Have you been honest with your children about your early experience with drugs?

VENTURA: It hasn't come up a lot, but I don't hide it.

PLAYBOY: During your radio talk-show days, did you wear a hemp hat and sample chocolate-covered hemp seeds on the air?

VENTURA: Yeah. John Birrenbach, whom I call Hemp John, sent me some hemp T-shirts, a hat, tennis shoes. I've got all sorts of clothing made out of it. I support industrial hemp.

PLAYBOY: How do the seeds taste?

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VENTURA: Lousy. I wouldn't buy them. They have no taste and no effect.

PLAYBOY: Would you sign a bill authorizing farmers to grow industrial hemp?

VENTURA: Already did. But we're fighting the feds. You've got this federal jurisdiction, this federal crap, that takes power from the states. They and their phony war on drugs are costing our farmers. Our farmers could set aside land to grow hemp and produce alternative products that could help their industry, but the government would rather wage this despicable war on drugs.

PLAYBOY: You were on the cover of *Hemp Times*. Is the legalization of marijuana still something you support?

VENTURA: I'll put it to you this way: If we legalized pot we could build all the pro stadiums we'd need, and probably a bunch of schools, too.

PLAYBOY: What about drinking? Did you ever have a problem?

VENTURA: No, I've never been an alcoholic. We drank a lot in the Seals, and when I was young, but after I started wrestling I didn't drink at all. When I drink, it's to get drunk, and that's about once or twice a year.

PLAYBOY: So, how much beer can you consume?

VENTURA: One time three of us went up to my friend's cabin in the winter. We drank 114 beers over the weekend. That's not bad, considering I don't drink much. That's almost two cases apiece.

PLAYBOY: On your radio show you advised those who drink not to drive. How often when you were young were you behind the wheel drunk, driving your drunken friends home?

VENTURA: On occasion, not a lot. That was in an era when society kind of laughed it off.

PLAYBOY: How crazy did it get?

VENTURA: [*Smiles*] Ever race a train? To the stop?

PLAYBOY: Who won?

VENTURA: Obviously we did. Ever throw a rod on a 1964 GTO?

PLAYBOY: Part of your devil-may-care attitude stems from your belief in fate, doesn't it?

VENTURA: I believe in fate. I believe that people are destined to do certain things and that you're destined to die on one particular day and you will.

PLAYBOY: What age do you think you'll live to?

VENTURA: That ain't my job to figure out.

PLAYBOY: Do you feel you've fulfilled your destiny yet?

VENTURA: You have different destinies. They change. I say that because of things that have happened in my life. Like when I became mayor. I wouldn't have become mayor had Disney not canceled my TV series, *Tag Team*. It had been bought up for seven shows; we were a midseason replacement. I had temporarily moved to California and they had already spent over $2 million

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on the sets. We had six scripts written, and the night before we were to go to work they pulled the plug on the whole thing. So I came back to Minnesota and that's when I ran for mayor. Destiny played a role there. I was destined to run for mayor, which in turn created my destiny to become governor.

PLAYBOY: Rocky Maivia, a wrestler in the WWF, says, "Vince McMahon genuinely cares about this business. Ted Turner couldn't give two pieces of monkey shit about it." Your opinion?

VENTURA: That's a bit bold. For Ted, wrestling is just one of many businesses. Vince cares more because it's his only business. I'd rather work for Vince, because with him you know where the buck stops. With the Turner organization—and I've worked for both—you have no idea who's calling the shots anywhere. You don't know who's the boss down there. It's total chaos.

PLAYBOY: When did wrestling change from pretending to be real to acknowledging that it's fake?

VENTURA: When Vince McMahon broke away. He wanted to get out from underneath the athletic commission, so he went public in a trial and said yes, wrestling is entertainment, and therefore we should not be governed by an athletic commission. He did that so he could have the freedom to run his business. It was a brilliant move on Vince's part, but it exposed the business.

PLAYBOY: Let's move from wrestling to one of Hollywood's famous kickboxers. Did you get to know Jean-Claude Van Damme before he was fired from *Predator*?

VENTURA: Yes, and I liked Jean-Claude, though he can be a whiner. For all his toughness and being the karate man of the world, when it comes to getting dirty, gritting your teeth and getting the job done, I'm not sure that he would always stand back-to-back with you. He complains so much: "Oh, it's so hot. So hot." It wasn't that Jean-Claude couldn't do the part, but I think he thought he was going to be karateing us in the jungle and everyone would see his handsome face. He didn't realize he was going to be stuck inside this predator suit and no one was going to see his face.

PLAYBOY: What about Steven Seagal?

VENTURA: I don't think he's all he claims to be. Didn't he claim to be a CIA man? I think he has a credibility problem. He has illusions of grandeur for himself. There's a famous story, which I shouldn't tell: There's an old wrestling stuntman who knocked him out. Seagal was bragging how he was a lethal weapon and could kill anybody with his pinkie, and this wrestler—who won't talk about it because he wants to keep working—put him in a sleeper hold to where he wet his pants.

PLAYBOY: Do you still harbor a fantasy to act with Robert De Niro?

VENTURA: Yeah, I'd love to. I'm a big De Niro fan. In fact, I scared him once at La Scala restaurant in Malibu. I walked over to say hello to him and he had this look of fear, because I'm 6'4" and 270 pounds and look like a gorilla.

PLAYBOY: At your inaugural festivities, Hunter S. Thompson had a sealed package delivered to you. What was in it?

VENTURA: I'll tell you when you find out what was in the sealed package at the Simpson trial. That's Hunter's and my business. There were no drugs though, if that's what you're thinking. Warren Zevon brought it to me. I never met Hunter, but he wanted to send me a message, and he did. It was an interesting one, and probably fairly accurate.

PLAYBOY: Which political figures have you admired over the years?

VENTURA: Not too many. My father didn't like politicians or generals, so they were never high on our list at home. Eisenhower, I don't remember enough. Kennedy was in too short a time—though I am obsessed with his death and the big lie we've been sold. LBJ, I didn't particularly admire. Nixon, nothing there. Gerald Ford served on the Warren Commission and pardoned Nixon. I admired Jimmy Carter, but he was too honest for the job. He was an outsider and they destroyed his credibility in office. Ronald Reagan did a good job—I don't know if I admire him, but I've been compared to him in the way he managed and how he put the best people in their positions and allowed them to do their jobs. As for Bush and Clinton, nothing exceptional. I admire them all for doing that job. Look at how that job ages them: They come in for four years and age 20.

PLAYBOY: You met with President Clinton and Al Gore to discuss education, tobacco money and Internet sales taxes. What was your impression?

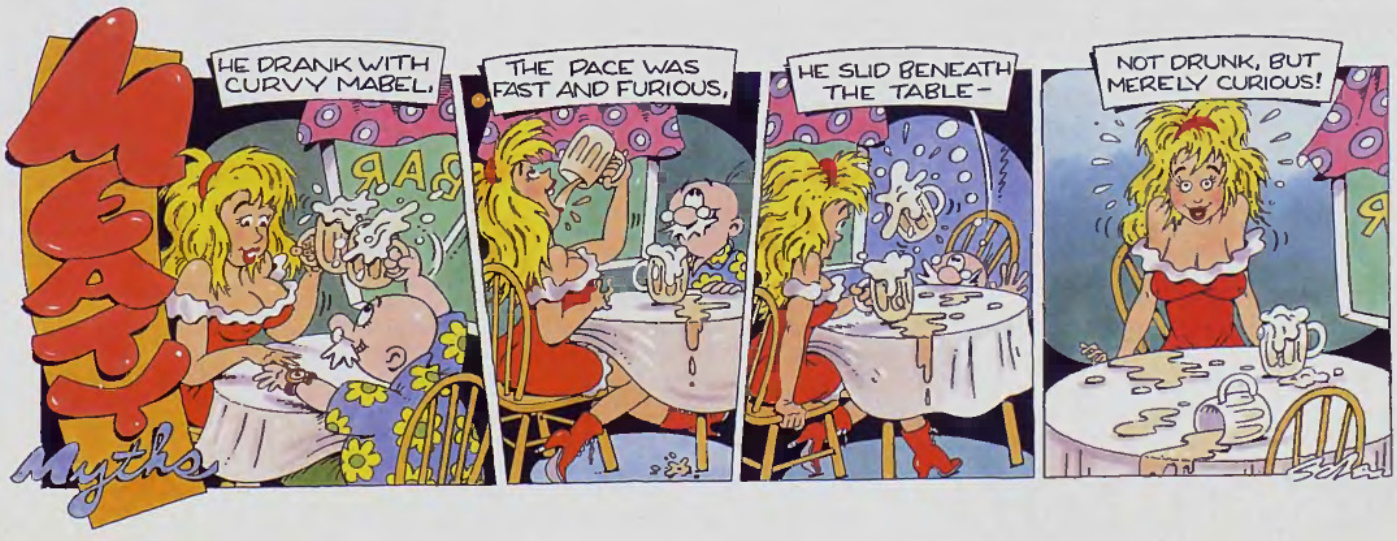
VENTURA: The president is very charismatic. He has some remarkable qualities about him. I understand how he achieved success. He's done a good job.

PLAYBOY: Did you get a sense of why some call him Slick Willy?

VENTURA: Who knows why? He's very much like Vince McMahon Sr., who was a promoter on the East Coast when I wrestled. He could totally screw you in a payoff for a wrestling match, and you'd be so angry. You'd go in to meet with him and he'd never raise his voice. He'd talk softly to you. He'd give you no more money and you'd walk out feeling good. Ten minutes later you'd realize that you didn't accomplish what you went in there to do. I think President Clinton is much the same. A very angry person can initially approach him, and the president is good at calming him down and giving him nothing and sending him out the door feeling good until an hour later when he realizes he got worked.

PLAYBOY: Do you agree with Hillary that there is a right-wing conspiracy in this country?

VENTURA: I don't know. Politics is all a conspiracy. There are conspiracies against me right now. Sure there are. To make me look bad, so that never again will an independent third-party governor get elected. There are people out there right now who have that on their agendas.



PLAYBOY: Your wife has said she feels like you're the Flying Wallendas. "Put one toe wrong, and you're going to end up in the sawdust, because there's no net." Do you feel that way too?

VENTURA: Terry's a Virgo and a German Lutheran, so she always will take the side of caution. I am much less cautious. I'm more "Let's spit in the wind and see what happens."

PLAYBOY: Terry said in *Mirabella* that your relationship began in lust, turned to love, then to hate, then back to love. What made her hate you?

VENTURA: Hate's probably too strong a word. But in any relation you're going to get angry with each other. A lot of it's immaturity. A relationship grows in maturity. Right now we're very mature. The anger came when we were both much more immature.

PLAYBOY: Have you ever lusted in your heart?

VENTURA: Hey, you can look all you want. It's that old thing: You can look at every new car, just don't stick the key in the ignition. That's human nature. If a gorgeous woman walks by, as a man you always look. And wonder. Sure. There's nothing wrong with that.

PLAYBOY: Ever feel tempted?

VENTURA: I learned in the Seals never to put myself in a compromising situation. I don't go to bars and didn't when I was on the road wrestling. I went to my room and watched television.

PLAYBOY: Did you and Terry ever fool around in this office?

VENTURA: No. I can do anything I want, but we've never had the opportunity. Not saying we wouldn't.

PLAYBOY: How do we get to know who a politician really is? Including you?

VENTURA: You don't.

PLAYBOY: Is there a public and a private Jesse Ventura?

VENTURA: Yes.

PLAYBOY: How different is one from the other?

VENTURA: Could be a lot different. Depends on what eyes you see him with.

PLAYBOY: How smart do you think you are?

VENTURA: I'm very street smart. I can read people fairly well.

PLAYBOY: And you believe that if you decided to run for the presidency you could get elected?

VENTURA: Right. Everyone says I can't, but I believe sure I could. This is America. And I proved it here. If you look at one California poll, I have an 80 percent recognition rate already, so I don't have to buy name recognition. Look at what I spent on my election: $600,000, of which half was state subsidy money, which all candidates got. So in reality I only raised $300,000. The Democrats and Republicans spent $5 million to $6 million apiece.

PLAYBOY: Have we entered the Age of Jesse Ventura?

VENTURA: It's a possibility, if I wanted to exploit that. But I don't want that job.

PLAYBOY: Are you going to deny yourself right into office one day?

VENTURA: The more I say it the more they keep pushing me.

PLAYBOY: If you were elected president, how long do you think you'd live?

VENTURA: Before they'd kill me? I'd be concerned.

PLAYBOY: Would this be the most dangerous thing you could do—get elected without the support of either major political party?

VENTURA: Maybe. But right now my job is to finish being governor for the next three years.

PLAYBOY: Some people are starting to compare you with Harry Truman.

VENTURA: Well, I hope I never have to deliver the bomb on anyone. I suppose it's because I'm Midwestern, and Harry was from Missouri, the show-me state. We both say what we feel. I can say what I want without worrying about being reelected.

PLAYBOY: What about in three years, if you decide to run for reelection?

VENTURA: I will simply say to the people: I will do the job another four years if you want me to. If you have someone who can do it better, elect them. Career politicians go out and say, "No one can do the job better than I have, that's why you need to reelect me." Like this cartoon on my refrigerator at home: an old crusty politician standing at the podium shaking his fist, saying, "Reelect me so I can go back and fight for term limits."

PLAYBOY: Since you thrive on attention, won't it be hard to leave office?

VENTURA: Sure, but I've had attention my whole life. I'll continue to have it.

PLAYBOY: We've talked for three days. Is there anything you've said that you're concerned about?

VENTURA: You asked a lot of questions that bring out the Jesse and the anger sometimes, but I want you to make sure that you write that I love this job, that I take it very seriously, that I'm a positive person. I think I'm a good leader and if you talk to my staff you'll find that I treat them very fairly. I never come in in a bad mood and I don't ever take it out on my staff when I get angry. I'm loyal to them and they're loyal to me. I don't want a spin put on this that somehow I'm a maniac tyrant who comes in to work every day and has people doing push-ups.

PLAYBOY: Do you think that you've made many mistakes?

VENTURA: Not too many. My mistakes are when people ask me a question and I give them an answer, rather than saying, let me think about it, and get back with a prepared answer. I don't work that way.

PLAYBOY: Our final question: What do you think about being interviewed in PLAYBOY?

VENTURA: It's an honor.

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City Girls (continued from page 127)

Being hairless rocks. He can go in really easy, he slides in, he slides out. It's very wet and smooth.

guiding it up and down, because they love that shit.
Barbara: Yeah.
Pepper: You need both hands.
Flo: Where's the third hand?
Gloria: I don't do the balls part. I do the base part, and the other hand's on me.
Pepper: What about when they say, "Hold my balls"?
Gloria: I lick them.
Pepper: But you have his penis in your mouth. How do you lick the balls?
Gloria: I shuttle.
Barbara: New York to D.C.
Gloria: That's what it is. I do the shuttle. They love that I'm getting so turned on by giving it that I have to touch myself. You should try it, Pepper.
Pepper: If I'm giving someone head and he's getting really turned on, I'll get turned on.
Gloria: So why not put that hand down there?
Pepper: Because I'm not as skilled as you are. I need all my concentration in one area. If I'm going to focus on me, then I'll lose track of what I'm doing and bite his dick off.
[*Barbara laughs.*]
Gloria: I once went out with a guy who, every five seconds while he was eating me, would turn his face to the side and lick my thigh.
Flo: He was breathing.
Gloria: He was dislodging my hair from his tongue. I told a friend about this and she said, "He was doing the crawl."
Flo: You're saying every five seconds he was getting a hair out of his mouth?
Pepper: How much hair do you have?
Flo: Is it time for the J Sisters? We need to take you to the J Sisters and have you waxed.
Gloria: He was anal-retentive.
Pepper: Really? I like anal-retentives!
Gloria: He wouldn't go down on me unless I'd showered immediately before.
Pepper: Oh my God! That's my dream guy!
Gloria: But sometimes when you're fooling around you have to get up to pee. Are you going to shower after each pee break?
Pepper: My ex-boyfriend showered seven times a day.
Flo: Has a guy ever gotten up out of bed to take a pee while you've been sleeping naked, and he comes back and snuggles up against you and his dick is——
Flo and Gloria: [*Simultaneously*] Still wet?
[*They laugh and clap their hands.*]
Flo: It sucks! I always make a point of sitting on the side of the bed, so there's absorption, and then getting in the bed.
Gloria: Blotting the hair, if you have any hair. [*To others*] She just got a wax.
Pepper: You have a Dorito?
Flo: No, it's like an airstrip. It's not triangular. It's like this. [*Flo holds up her pinkie.*]
Barbara: Cuban?
Flo: Brazilian. It was the most miserable experience I've ever had. They wax off the sides like a normal wax, your bathing suit line. Then they want to do all of the bottom, so she puts your ankles in your hands, and they take off every single part and they dig around in your labia. They take all of it off. She cuts it and then she waxes it.
Pepper: Why do you need that?
Flo: Well, in Brazil you wear a thong and it's teeny-weeny, and you don't want any hair.
Pepper: They go inside your labia?
Gloria: There's no hair in your labia.
Flo: They just make sure. They pull you out and get all in there.
Gloria: Do they use tweezers?
Flo: Tweezers afterward.
Barbara: Ah!
Flo: And then they do your butthole.
Gloria: When they're cutting the hair, do they use mini banana clips for your pussy?
Flo: They have a little white comb.
Pepper: A pussy comb?
Flo: Exactly.
Barbara: I hope they sterilize those.
Flo: The weird part is that they go all the way underneath and then in the front they leave this landing strip. It's so

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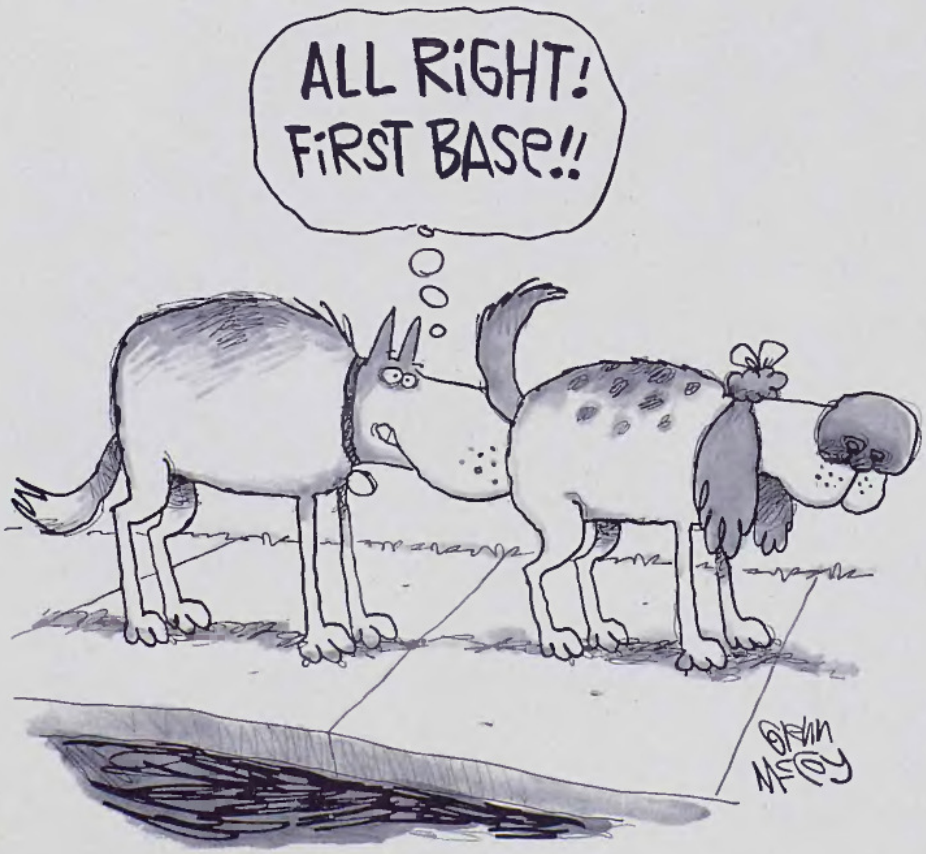
unattractive.
Barbara: Dorito is better.
Flo: I told her I wanted a Dorito.
Pepper: I don't understand why these women are so wax-happy. Why can't they just wax your thighs when you need it, and leave it alone?
Flo: Because they're Brazilian.
Pepper: Mine are Russian.
Flo: Mine are from Brazil. We're talking the J Sisters.
Gloria: It's a trend.
Pepper: I don't want a trendy vagina.
Gloria: Where are they?
Flo: On 57th. It's famous. And it hurts so bad, I cried.
Gloria: But now you have very good sex.
Flo: Two days afterward I was getting really used to being hairless, and it rocked. He can go in really easy, he slides in, he slides out. It's very wet and smooth.
Barbara: So you're liking it now.
Flo: Now it's growing back fast and uneven, some small, some long. I think I'm going to go back in again. At the beginning I was really uncomfortable with it. You know when you send your dog out to get a summer haircut and it comes back all shaved and bald and really freaked out? That's the way I was. But I love it now. The guy I'm with loves how bald I am.
Gloria: Did he suggest it?
Flo: He did.
Gloria: Didn't that concern you?
Flo: He just said it. He didn't tell me, "Go do it right now or I'll never go out with you again." Plus, he shaves his balls.
Barbara: That's so fascinating to me. I've never been with someone who did that.
Flo: It's the second time I've been with a guy who shaves his balls. They say it's very, very sensitive.
Gloria: Does that mean he has no hair?
Flo: No, there's a little. He has pubic hair around the cock.
Pepper: Wait, wait. He puts on shaving cream and *shaves it*?
Flo: No, no. He uses an electric razor. There's a little ball stubble, but it's soft.
Gloria: I've never noticed a lot of hair around the balls anyway.
Flo: Check it out.
Gloria: No thanks. What do you like a guy to call sex—fucking or making love?
Barbara: It depends. There are certain moments when a guy says, "Let's fuck," and I think, Go fuck yourself. There are times when you want a certain level of tenderness and sweetness, when you just want someone to look at you and say, "I really want to make love to you." It is such a turn-on that I just melt. What turns me on even more is when, once you get going, he's like, "I love fucking you." Dirty sex. It depends on the quality of the sex, though. I have certain sex that's very sweet and tender and soft and slow with lots of kissing and murmuring, "I love you, I love making love to you, you're so beautiful, blah blah blah." But then there's, "I want to fuck you like a big dog. I want to fuck you, you make me crazy, harder." It's a little more thrusty, there's less kissing, there's more eyes rolling to the back of the head, and he's grabbing the back of your hair.
Pepper: It's horrible to me when a guy says, "You make me so crazy." I almost start to laugh.
Barbara: Oh no. I love it. I get right into it.
Pepper: I feel like it's such a line, like I've heard it.
Gloria: But it's not a line.
Barbara: Sometimes it's great just to have someone talking, no matter what he's saying, just whispering in my ear. He could be reciting his grocery list.
Flo: I like more detailed dirty talk, like, "This is what I'm going to do to you. I'm going to turn you over and fuck you from behind while your face is buried in the pillow." It gets me hot.
Gloria: Isn't there such a thing as too much?
Flo: Never with me.
Pepper: How about the word cunt?
Gloria: I've never even had a guy try to say it.
Barbara: I've never had anyone say it. But I like the way pussy sounds, whispered in my ear.
Gloria: That's very nice, but do you like the way pussy tastes? I get freaked out if a guy goes down on me, then wants to kiss me.
Flo: I love it, if I'm pretty clean.
Pepper: I'm not so into that.
Barbara: I like it a lot.
Gloria: It doesn't smell as strong as it does on a finger.
Flo: Because your vaginal juice doesn't smell as strong as your musky everyday pussy.
Gloria: Or as strong as your underpants at the end of the day.
Pepper: As long as it's my pussy he's going down on I don't have a problem with it.
Gloria: Once I kissed a guy after I swallowed and he was too into it and I got totally weirded out.
Flo: [*Shivers in disgust*] I don't swallow.
Pepper: Have you ever spit it back into his mouth?
Flo: Ah! I'm freaking out!
Gloria: What about morning sex? Am I the only one here who likes it? He wakes up with it all hard. It's so exciting.
Pepper: What about the breath?
Gloria: Oh God, Pepper, get over it!
Pepper: How can you not be aware of the breath? The kissing and the breath? I tell him to get up and brush his teeth and then come back.
Barbara: Most guys I've been with do that on their own. They go into the bathroom and stick some toothpaste in their mouth.
Flo: They make an effort. But if they don't, I don't care. I just don't kiss 'em.
Barbara: But what if I have bad breath and he has bad breath?
Flo: Doggy style!



PLAYMATE NEWS

SPOOKTACULAR

By now you've heard about Hef's extravagant Halloween bash, which was such an overwhelming success that it made headlines around the country. In the *New York Daily News*, columnists Rush and Molloy reported on the many celebrities who tricked or treated at Hef's, including Ben Affleck, Sarah Michelle Gellar, Matthew Perry, Janeane Garofalo, Thora Birch, Melissa Joan Hart, Quentin Tarantino, Tom Arnold, Danielle Fishel, Ben Savage, Alyson Hannigan, Fabio, Kato Kaelin, Lou "the Hulk" Ferrigno, Roseanne, Oscar De La Hoya, Martin Landau, James Woods, Scott Caan, Scott Baio, Andy Dick and Heidi Fleiss. On *The Late Show With David Letterman*, actress Lauren Holly (there to promote her television program *Chicago Hope*) chatted about Hef's party for nearly her entire segment. Of course, Hef provided all of the props to ensure that his guests were thoroughly spooked: a fake graveyard, recorded shrieks and moans, gargoyles, a haunted forest inspired by *The Blair Witch Project*, original costumes from such classic horror movies as *Alien*, *The Exorcist*, *Mars Attacks* and *Frankenstein* and a hall of horrible heads. Playmates came dressed as pirates, Indians, rabbits and more. We can't wait for next year's blowout.

Playmates walked away with top hat and horn honors. Above: Centerfolds Jodi Ann Paterson, Carrie Stevens and Kalin Olson. Clockwise from far left: Alexandria "Lexie" Karlsen gives Mansion employee Carl Nikolan a leg up (what happened to his left hand is another story). Victoria Fuller, a Bunny through and through, shows her friend and Hef why the backside is better. Fire-haired Angel Baris gets cozy with Alfred the creepy butler. Liz Stewart poses with ET (who wasn't the party's only extraterrestrial).

The day before Hef's Halloween party, Miss August 1998 Angela Little and Miss October 1999 Jodi Ann Paterson hosted a preview of the Playboy Mansion's elaborate decorations on *Access Hollywood*. Top left: They're not afraid of the big, bad monster. Left: Miss September 1985 Venice Kang gets a special bunny hug.

35 YEARS AGO THIS MONTH

"It took a lot of nerve," recalls Miss March 1965 Jennifer Jackson of her selection as PLAYBOY's first black Playmate. Jennifer caught our eye when she and her twin sister, Janice, who both worked as Cottontails at the Chicago Playboy Club, appeared in our August 1964 pictorial *The Bunnies of Chicago*. "I'm the proverbial jack-of-all-trades who can never settle down in any one role when there are so many others left to try," Jennifer said then. So she became a Playmate, making history and a lasting impression.

Jennifer Jackson.

PRETTY PETRA

Join Petra Verkaik for the first Models Expo, April 14–16 at the Adam's Mark Hotel in Dallas. "I'll be there with Suzi Simpson, Echo Johnson, Victoria Zdrok, Karin Taylor and lots of my other Playmate friends," Petra says. For tickets call 214-922-8000 or go to modelsexpo.com.

PLAYMATE NEWS

"I have an exercise studio in Los Angeles, and the PLAYBOY offices are right around the corner. The Playmates used to come in to work out after photo shoots. It was very exciting. But recalling my favorite is sad because it's Dorothy Stratten, the Playmate who was murdered. Dorothy came to the gym every day. When she died PLAYBOY called to tell me. It was tough. Her death was just so unnecessary."

DREAM TEAM

The dynamic trio—Playboy X-treme Team captain Danelle Folta and teammates Jennifer Lavoie and Deborah Driggs—is at it again. The more-athletic-than-you'll-ever-know women recently competed in a race in Castaic Lake, California where they placed in the top ten in the female division. "I can't say we're super proud of how the race ended," Danelle says, "but that just means we'll have to train twice as hard for the next one."

The Dream Team in action.

Other team members include Tylyn John and Karin Taylor. For more information on the Playboy X-treme Team and its upcoming competitions, click playboy.com.

PLAYMATE BIRTHDAYS

March 3: Miss October 1994
Victoria Zdrok
March 8: Miss May 1985
Kathy Shower
March 11: Miss August 1971
Cathy Rowland
March 18: Miss July 1967
Heather Ryan
March 23: Miss December 1997
Karen McDougal

PLAYMATE TRIVIA

Q: Why isn't there a Miss March 1955?

A: Because there is no March 1955 issue. Because of the rapid growth of the magazine, the staff couldn't meet that month's deadline. So the March issue became the April issue. The missing issue was not included in the numbering, so volume 3, number 1 appeared in January 1956 instead of December 1955.

GIRL TALK

We spoke recently to Stacy Fuson, who lives in Los Angeles. Stacy was featured in the January 2000 collector's edition.

Stacy Fuson.

Q: The last we heard, you had a role in a television pilot called *The Sullivan Sisters*. Did anything come of it?

A: Unfortunately, *The Sullivan Sisters* didn't turn into a series. To be honest, I'm a bit unsure about pursuing acting. I'm considering going to school.

Q: What would you study?

A: Probably psychology, though I'm not certain. I'm still investigating. I'll either go to UCLA or the University of Washington. I have an affinity for the West Coast.

Q: What's in your CD player?

A: Heart, Chicago, Celine Dion.

Q: Favorite TV shows?

A: *Beverly Hills 90210*, *I Love Lucy*, *Bewitched* and *The Brady Bunch*.

Q: What's the one thing you would change about men?

A: I would tell them to stop lying.

Q: Let's say you're out in public. Does everyone recognize you as Miss February 1999?

A: I hardly ever get recognized as a Playmate. But I get asked out on dates quite a bit.

Q: What's the worst pick-up line you've ever been dealt?

A: I can't remember, thank goodness. Lines go in one ear and out the other.

Q: What's the key to making a good first impression on you?

A: That's easy. Just be yourself.

PLAYMATE GOSSIP

LEROY NEIMAN

Once the epitome of a blonde who had more fun, PMOY 1994 **Jenny McCarthy** has dyed her hair dark brown for a role in the film *White Bread*. The flick is directed by Jen's new hubby, **John Asher**. Jenny's staying coy about a deal with Fox for a fall 2000 sitcom. . . . **Natalia Sokolova** and **Deanna Brooks** promoted the new line of Playboy apparel and accessories at the Magic trade show in Las Vegas. At right, Deanna hits the jackpot with a girlie peasant shirt. . . . **Layla Roberts**, who rocked **Steve Buscemi's** world in *Armageddon*, has another high-profile movie role. The film is *Red Letters*, and Layla plays **Nastassja Kinski's** sister. **Laura Cover** has a cameo. . . . **Janet Pilgrim** hosted a recent Mansion luncheon. . . . In an episode of *Family Feud* dubbed "Beauties and the Beasts," Playmates **Lisa Dergan**, **Heather Kozar**, **Angela Little**, **Deanna Brooks** and **Daphnee Lynn Duplaix** competed against five WCW wrestlers. All of the proceeds went to charity.

Deanna Brooks.

Lunch ladies.

Survey says: Playmates!

PLAYBOY ORIGINAL MOVIE

PLAYMATE HOSTS

Suzanne Stokes
Miss February

Nicole Marie Lenz
Miss March

more than you ever imagined...

THE CHEATING GAME - A ravishing bride-to-be tests the waters before tying the marriage knot. February 19, 23

DARK GARDEN - What price would you pay for your fantasies to become real? February 18, 21, 22, 29

NAUGHTY AMATEUR HOME VIDEOS: FETISH FANTASY - No-holds-barred novices take to the camera and display their definitions of fantasy. February 5, 7, 10, 16, 18, 21, 27

NIGHT CALLS LIVE - Tune in as Juli and Tiffany lead viewers on an evening of revealing phone confessions. Watch for a chance to win a trip to Hedonism III in Runaway Bay, Jamaica.*
LIVE February 2; Replay 5, 9 LIVE February 16; Replay 19, 23

NIGHT CALLS 411 LIVE - Get the 411 on the hot new call-in show that – believe it or not – takes out more stops than ever before.
LIVE February 9, Replays 12, 16 LIVE February 23, Replay 26

PLAYBOY'S HOT CITY GIRLS - Let sizzling Playmate Morena Corwin show you more than a slice of big-city life. February 20, 23, 28

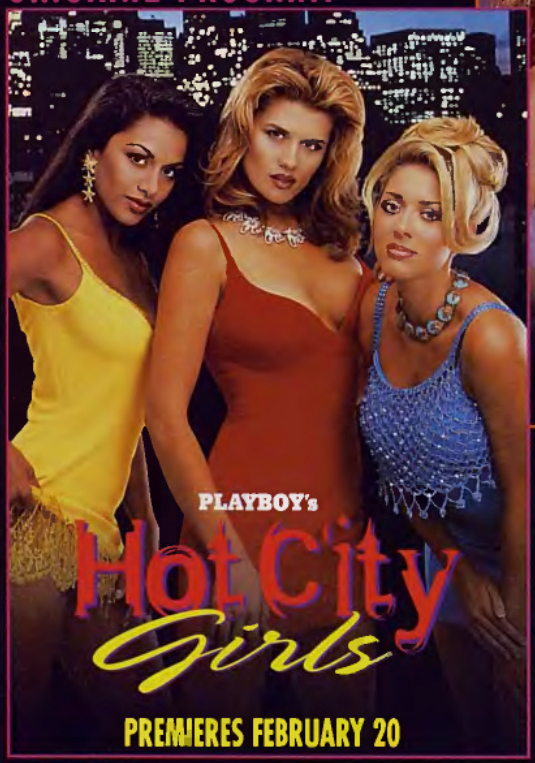
PLAYBOY'S SEXY GIRLS NEXT DOOR: HOME GROWN - Newcomers invade the neighborhood in hopes of winning a fantasy video shoot in Tinseltown. February 4, 7, 9, 10, 13, 16, 21, 26, 28

SEX COURT: PLEASURABLE INTENT - Judge Julie's gavel gets in the act when sexual pranks prove to be hotter than anyone can handle. February 4, 5, 7, 9, 13, 15, 16, 22, 26

TEMPTATIONS - Three couples join forces and bodies to save a family ranch from ruin. February 5, 20, 24

ORIGINAL SERIES

ORIGINAL PROGRAM



ADULT MOVIES

PLAYBOY TV

*For program information and official rules for Night Calls/Hedonism III Sweepstakes go to:

www.playboytv.com

Playboy TV is available from your local cable television operator or home satellite, DIRECTV, PRIMESTAR or DISH Network dealer.

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PLAYBOY on the scene

WHAT'S HAPPENING, WHERE IT'S HAPPENING AND WHO'S MAKING IT HAPPEN

SLICK TECH

An electric shaver isn't the kind of device that normally turns heads. But as you can see from the photograph below, Grundig's version of the utilitarian tool is a killer. Television sets, computers, speakers and stereo systems are all undergoing face-lifts. "Technology is becoming so miniaturized and inexpensive, it's freed up the form factor," says Ravi Sawhney, president of RKS Design, the California-based firm that created the Benwin EX4 flat-panel multimedia speakers, at bottom. The EX4s are about as tall as an average guy's hand and are less than an inch thick. And that's still about four times larger than the audio circuitry that enables the speakers to create a full 360-degree sound field. According to Sawhney, the move toward more stylized gadgetry means we'll be choosing electronics for the same reason many of us select a particular car—to reflect our personalities. And while products will be exciting visually, "they'll work for you, rather than vice versa," Sawhney says. Living up to that promise, Grundig's Pro Avantgarde shaver is loaded with smart features, including a retractable head cover instead of the removable—and often lost—plastic variety and a liquid crystal display that tells you how much battery power remains. Spoon's Secret Agent Man is a digital watch with a vertical or horizontal display and push-button access to the time and up to 100 memos, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. You can even program this slick ticker to remind you of special events. Motorola's equally eye-grabbing Timeport is billed as the world's smallest web phone. The breast pocket–sized gadget in sleek silver is an analog and digital wireless phone that lets you grab news and information off the Internet. But the chicest of all new tech toys is the flat TV. The Samsung model that is pictured at the left connects directly to a DVD player or a VCR for bedside movie screenings. Yeah, baby.

—BETH TOMKIW

GEORGE GEORGIOU

Above, far left to right: Grundig's Pro Avantgarde provides a close shave by combining rotary and horizontal cutting movements (about $300). The S.A.M. digital watch by Spoon keeps time and up to 100 memos or addresses ($215). Motorola's Timeport cell phone can access the web ($250).

Above: Sure, you could stash Samsung's SyncMaster 570pPlus in your home office. But with picture-in-picture viewing, an input for a DVD player or VCR and a swivel base with stereo speakers, the 15-inch flat-panel monitor is perfect in the bedroom or den. To add a surround-sound effect, connect Benwin's EX4 multimedia speakers to the mix. Price: about $1250 for the monitor, $130 for a pair of speakers.

WHERE AND HOW TO BUY ON PAGE 159.

Grapevine

A Little Bit of Mariah

MARIAH CAREY finished off the Nineties with more than 100 million albums sold (including her recent *Rainbow*), as well as roles in two movies, *The Bachelor* and *Double O-Soul*. But there's more to her than belly buttons and breaking records. Here's a peek at the rest.

Busting Out

BUSTA RHYMES, hip-hop prankster, clothing and shoe designer and co-star of the remake of *Shaft*, is keeping an eye on the ball.

DOUGLAS STIEGLEITER

Her Cup Runneth Over

Captain of the Extreme Bikini Team JULIE ANN GERHARD has been an Illinois Hawaiian Tropic finalist, calendar model, music video actress and web star. With all that exposure, we'd be smiling, too.

© ROGER KAMENSKY/CELEBRITY PHOTO

See Through

GLADYS JIMENEZ was spotted on *Silk Stalkings* and in the movie *Secrets of a Chambermaid*. Now she has a recurring role on *The Young and the Restless*. It was worth the wait.

STEVE TORRES

Kristin Wears Well

KRISTIN LEA, an aspiring pro surfer, can be found in millennium calendars and surfer magazine ads. We found her adorable on or off the waves.

No Stereotype Here

CIBO MATTO's CD *Stereotype A* is a bit of pop, a little hip-hop, some Indian, country and a tad of techno. Oh yes, the bass player on the right? SEAN LENNON.

PAUL NATKIN/PHOTO RESERVE INC

© ERIC FREIMANIS

Baby, It's Cold Outside

BRANDI MICHELE can be seen in the Alaska Girls Y2K calendar and on the website latinsensations.com. One look at Brandi warms us up.

Potpourri

TUB SMOKES

Cigar sales have leveled off, but Caswell-Massey, "America's oldest chemists and perfumers," is keeping the stogie spirit alive with its line of cigar salts for the bath. Each seven-inch cigar tube holds enough Sizzlin' Bath Salts for two soaks. Three scents are available: mint, lemon blossom and lavender. The price: $10 for two tubes in any one scent. Call 800-326-0500 or check the website caswell-massey.com.

JENNIFER'S ANGEL

Jennifer Janesko, the pin-up artist noted for her calendars, trading cards and occasional illustrations in PLAYBOY, has just printed *Night Angel*, the 24″x36″ poster pictured here. "This is the first of many images to be released as a poster," Jennifer revealed, commenting that her *Night Angel* painting has long been sought by collectors in poster form. Price: $40 unsigned or $55 signed. Call 913-859-6299. More of Jennifer's work can be viewed on her website, janesko.com.

DARLING, YOU LOOK PHANTASMIC

Phantasm, an erotic role-playing game for one couple, will definitely warm up cold winter nights. The fun begins with a choice of cards from seven categories—adventure, romance, femme fatale, metamorphosis, macho man, lust unlimited and seduction. You and your partner each have a role-playing book containing 70 naughty fantasies to act out. A fantasy titled X-rated, for example, involves the making of a risqué movie, while Slaves of Time calls for nothing more than an egg timer, perhaps a little music and "two people who really enjoy sex." You can order Phantasm for $29.95 from 800-474-6702.

COCKTAIL BOOKS, ANYONE?

There's a whole lot of shakin' going on thanks to the many new drink books out. *Vintage Cocktails: Authentic Recipes and Illustrations From 1920–1960* ($12.98) is Robert Markel and Susan Waggoner's toast to great drinks and liquor ephemera of the past. *The Bloody Mary* ($18.95), by Christopher O'Hara, contains 20 variations of "the world's most complex cocktail." Ed McCarthy's *Champagne for Dummies* ($16.99) is an IDG Books softcover that tells everything you want to know about bubbly. *The Bartender's Guide* ($14.99), by Peter Bohrmann, contains more than 1400 cocktail recipes and 200 photos, while *Cocktail Food* ($16.95), by Mary Barber and Sara Whiteford with Lori Narlock, is a tasty testament to "50 finger foods with attitude." Last, *Drink as Much as You Want and Live Longer* ($14.95), by Frederick Beyerlein, was written for everyone who enjoys the grain or the grape. Contact the publisher, Loompanics Unlimited, at 800-380-2230.

SPACE IS THE PLACE

Robert Godwin's multivolume softcover series on America's Apollo and Gemini missions is the most ambitious look at our space program to date. You'll learn about the technical minutiae as well as what the crews ate and drank. A CD-ROM that contains movies, video and still images taken on flights is included with each volume. Price: $13.95 to $16.95 from Apogee Books at cgpublishing.com.

BILL ROGERS

SMARTASS SPHERE

Think of the Q Ball as the Magic 8 Ball of the 21st century. Ask it a question, shake it three times and you'll experience a whoosh of crazy sounds and swirling lights followed by a dialect-heavy voice, often giving a sarcastic answer such as "Fuhgeddaboutit!" Shake the Q Ball too hard and it'll admonish you with "Stop it, you're killing me." According to the Sharper Image (it sells the Q Ball) there are more than 140 spoken responses, from idiomatic phrases to jive. Price: $39.95. Call 800-344-4444 to order.

JOHN O'BRIEN

RUM'S THE WORD

Bacardi rum is celebrating this year with Bacardi 8 Millennium, a limited edition Baccarat decanter (pictured here) that's filled with Bacardi 8 dark rum. Only 3000 numbered decanters will be produced before the mold is broken, ensuring their value as collectibles. The bottle design was created in the Forties to hold the founding family's finest dark rums. The price is $700 a bottle, and that includes a personal certificate of authenticity signed by a member of the Bacardi family and the company's chief executive.

LADIES IN WAITING

Collectors Press, a publisher of popular culture art books, has just released *Artist Archives*, six softcovers devoted to the pin-up work of Gil Elvgren and Alberto Vargas (*Elvgren Girls I* and *II*, and *Varga Girls I* and *II*), plus other artists whose paintings are included in *Swimsuit Sweeties* and *Exotic Ladies*. Text is by mystery writer Max Allan Collins. Price: $11.95 each or $60 a set, call 800-423-1848. Next book: *For the Boys: The Racy Pin-ups of WW II*.

GENTLEMEN, START YOUR CHAIRS

If our *Let's Go Racing* feature in this issue has you hankering for the fast lane, then an inflatable seat such as the one pictured here belongs in your den. Several styles are available, each decorated with a specific race driver's logo, colors and number. The one on this page is the Jeff Gordon Tire Chair; a Dale Earnhardt Sr. seat is also available. Each has a cup holder in the armrest, and the maximum weight it will support is 250 pounds. Alvimar Performance Corp. sells the seats for $49.95 each. Call 800-323-6223.

Next Month

BIJOU

YEAR IN MUSIC

I WANT MY MP3

GIMME A BREAK

ANNUAL MUSIC SPECTACULAR—IT WAS A YEAR OF POP AND CIRCUMSTANCE, FEATURING RICKY, JENNIFER, BRITNEY, BRUCE, SANTANA, KID ROCK, KORN, THE ROOTS, JAY-Z, THE BACKSTREET BOYS AND MACY GRAY. **BARBARA NELLIS** HAILS THE CHART-TOPPERS AND TEENYBOPPERS AND DECIDES WHO'S GOT LEGS

BIJOU PHILLIPS—THE WILDFLOWER DAUGHTER OF THE MAMAS AND THE PAPAS' JOHN PHILLIPS HAS BLOSSOMED. TRUST US. FIRST, HER MUSIC CAREER. NOW, AN ALL-NUDE PICTORIAL. TEN ROCKING PAGES

BARRY WHITE—WE'VE BEEN SEXING IT UP TO HIS LOVE SONGS FOR DECADES. **JULIE BAIN** CUDDLES WITH THE KING OF *STAYING POWER*, WHO TALKS ABOUT THE ELVIS SONG THAT SAVED HIM FROM GANG LIFE, THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOOD RAP AND BAD RAP AND WHETHER OR NOT ALLY MCBEAL IS TOO THIN

LOVE AND DEATH, VEGAS STYLE—WAS GAMBLING KINGPIN TED BINION'S DEATH A HOMICIDE OR AN OVERDOSE? FROM THE NATION'S PLAYLAND COMES A JUICY MURDER MYSTERY WITH ALL THE TRIMMINGS: TREACHERY, THEFT AND SEX. YES, IT'S GOING TO BE A MOVIE. BY **PETER ALSON**

BIG BIZNESS—LIMP BIZKIT'S ROCK-RAP SHTICK WAS 1999'S MOST CONTROVERSIAL ACT. FRONT MAN **FRED DURST** EXPLAINS WHAT REALLY HAPPENED AT WOODSTOCK, HOW HE SNAGGED A VP SLOT AT INTERSCOPE AND WHY, CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF, ROCK STARDOM ISN'T ALL ABOUT THE *NOOKIE*. BY **ALISON LUNDGREN**

SONGS THAT CHANGED THE WORLD—THE FIVE GREATEST, FROM PEOPLE WHO PLAY AND SING FOR A LIVING. WE POLLED BRIAN WILSON, JOEY RAMONE, WARREN G, ALICE COOPER AND MORE. THEIR ANSWERS ARE TERRIFIC MATERIAL FOR BAR DEBATE. BY **CHARLES M. YOUNG**

EVANS AND NOVAK—WHY DID KENNEDY GET AWAY WITH IT WHILE CLINTON DIDN'T? WHAT'S WRONG WITH DRUDGE-AGE JOURNALISM? AND WHY WOULD TRUMP-WINFREY BE A WINNING TICKET? THE FAMED COLUMNISTS AND CNN PUNDITS PONDER THIS AND PLENTY MORE. PLAYBOY INTERVIEW BY **DAVID SHEFF**

I WANT MY MP3—DOWNLOADING MUSIC OFF THE INTERNET IS EASY AND FUN. HERE'S ALL THE INFORMATION YOU NEED, PLUS OUR FAVORITE PORTABLE PLAYERS. BY **BETH TOMKIW**

SPRING BREAK—WE STORMED THE COLLEGE ACTION SPOTS (CANCUN, DAYTONA, SOUTH PADRE). GUESS WHAT? BEAUTIFUL WOMEN WERE TAKING IT ALL OFF. TEN PAGES OF SWEATY FUN IN THE SUN

PLUS: PLAYBOY'S SPRING AND SUMMER FASHION FORECAST, AMUSING GADGETS FOR LONG FLIGHTS, NEW CABLE MODEMS THAT WILL CHANGE ENTERTAINMENT, AND MISS APRIL, **HEF'S** VERY OWN PLAYMATE, **BRANDE RODERICK**

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appropriately complex